

THE WORD AND WORK

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

Wm. Robert Heid, Editor

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God's Family

W. R. H.

PEER PRESSURE?

It was in a Louisville area middle school that the fourteen-year old girls put pressure on one of their number, teasing her that she was still a virgin. It didn't take many weeks until she decided, whatever her past thoughts had been, that now was the time to end the accusations. With a classmate to perform, and one of her girl friends for a witness, she cinched the point that if she had been a virgin, she was no longer.

When the principal ferreted out the facts from fellow students and the witness, the kids themselves conceded to the act. Parents were called in, informed, and the pair were turned over to them and then suspended for a few days.

Was this a solitary incident, or an exceptional case of circumstances? I would like to believe that it was—but not so. It may be the exception, in that we heard of the case, but it is not itself exceptional. From reports of counselors, distraught parents, and panic centers, we read that the moral fibre of the American home—yea, many Christian homes—is at its lowest level. This is all in fulfillment of scriptures, such as “In the last days, grievous times shall come;” “Lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God”; “thou sufferest the woman Jezebel, . . . who teacheth and seduceth my servants to commit fornication;” and “when the Son of Man cometh, will He find faith upon the earth?” Does this mean, then, that our young people are doomed to promiscuity? Is there no anchor against the swelling tide, no haven for this time of storm? The church of Jesus must meet this need head-on.

THE VALUE OF VIRTUE

In this paragraph, I would like to use the word virtue to specially mean sexual purity and virginity, (words that sex education has little time for.) Too many of our young people have little or no concept of the depth of riches that God includes with virtue. Paul states: “fornicators and adulterers God will judge,” and again, “he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.” Paul wrote to the Corinthians, that he wanted to present them as a pure virgin to Christ. While we know that has a deep spiritual meaning, nevertheless, it uses the best illustration available when the words “pure virgin” are chosen.

Man's need for a sexual companionship was supplied by God Himself, in the provision of holy marriage. Peter wrote that the woman's

chaste behavior would be influential in the evangelizing of an unbelieving husband.

Christian parents should impress upon their boys and girls that virginity—until marriage—is God's best, and that it will yield most assuredly the highest bliss for the yearnings of their young hearts. It is Satan's lie that tells young folks that there is great advantage to pre-marital experiences and that sexual sophistication is a step upward in maturity. It is the same ruse that he uses with drink, smoking, drugs, cursing, and the like. Why doesn't he tell them that he wants to doom them to a lifetime of regret, blighted self-respect, and tinges of mistrust? Nor would I present a double standard, Virginity and purity are the birthrights of boys as well as girls, and the blessings will be identical. Flee from the power of peer pressure!

THE VALUE OF THE SOUL

But there is a worse loss than losing one's virtue, and that is the losing of the soul. What would a man give in exchange for his soul? We hurt deeply, when we see teenagers cast their virtue to the ground—and rightly so, for it can never be regained, and is the first step to greater loss. But how many, both young and old, have not only blighted their lives, their married lives, and their sex lives, but have considered that their souls, also, are worthless, and deliver them over to the power of Satan? How many times are the sins of the teen-years only the beginning of a long and continuous slide that leads to eternal destruction? They find themselves falling, with no rope to grab; going under, with no firm place to set their foot. Suicide has become, next to auto accidents, young people's worst killer. Doctors and Psychologists are telling us that we must be on the lookout for the symptoms—that there are always warning signs. Yes, we need to watch for the symptoms, but more than that, we must know that we have, in Jesus, the one Answer that can meet their every need. Lives that are not worth the living, are lives that have not met Jesus as Savior.

We who have the joy of Jesus abiding in our hearts, need to mingle with those who know Him not. We need to exert a kind of peer pressure also, and one that has eternal spiritual power with it. In fact, we do exercise that pressure. This is why campus ministries have cured addicts, stopped drunkenness, purified courtships, and established Christian homes. This is why Christian business fellowship has wielded an influence wherever Christian workers have given their testimonies.

We decry the teenager who throws away his virginity, but there is a way that we can do something about it, and do something about the eternal soul at the same time. We can, and **MUST** show forth our loving Savior in day to day living before them and with them. And we can only teach them values that are first values dear unto us.



Viewing the News

Jack Blaes

LESTER ROLOFF, MINISTER OF THE PEOPLE'S CHURCH of Corpus Christi, Texas, a fundamentalist evangelist and four other persons were killed November 2 when the small plane piloted by Roloff crashed to the ground after flying into a thunderstorm in east Texas. He founded and headed Roloff Evangelistic Enterprises which operated homes for delinquent boys and girls and men and women in trouble with the law. He was admired by fundamentalists for his stand against any form of state control of his homes. He had been in a long-standing battle with the state of Texas over licensure of his Rebecca Home for Girls and Anchor Home for Boys before a state district judge decided that Roloff could operate his homes without a license. Other victims in the crash were identified as Susan Lynn Smith, Elaine Wingert, Cheryl Palmer, and Enola Slade.

ANOTHER SUCH BIT OF NEWS CONCERNING ANOTHER Texan, Grady Nutt, known around the country as the "Prime Minister of Humor", was killed in a plane crash near Vinemont, Alabama. Nutt was an ordained Baptist minister, and during his student days at Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, ministered to the Graefenburg congregation near Frankfort, Ky. He was greatly loved as a pastor, and will be missed by many friends throughout the country.

The WALL STREET JOURNAL NOTED IT THIS WAY: "Antichrist (666) Blocked in Effort to Worm His Way Into the IRS" was the headline of an article that appeared in the September 17, 1982 issue. The IRS and the Social Security Administration chose 666 as a code number on a form involving IRA's.

The number was chosen, explains the IRS, "because a scanner could read it easily." An IRS official later appeared on CBN's "700 Club" show to assure viewers that 666 has been discarded for 555. Bible believers have a feeling that we may be hearing much more about that Antichrist number.

THE NATION'S ONE HEALTH PROBLEM: for people between 15 and 24 the U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop says is violence in all its forms. Speaking to the annual meeting of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Koop stated that there has been a surge of murders, suicides, and motor vehicle deaths that has caused the loss of "millions of years of life." He says that pediatricians can help reverse this trend by watching for family problems and other conditions that often lead to violence in the young, such as psychomotor seizures, mothers under psychiatric care, violence between parents, youngsters without friends, and attempted suicide. The Surgeon General also advises that violent scenes on television and in movies are a major stimulant to violence among the young, and urges pediatricians to advise families to "self-censor" the violence on TV and in the movies.

President Reagan signed a bill into law which is designed to help the situation regarding violence on the highways. This law will use \$125 million to encourage states to reduce drunken driving and stiffen penalties for offenders. Drunken drivers are blamed for at least 25,000 traffic deaths a year.

LIFE EXPECTANCY IN THE U.S., ACCORDING TO the National Center on Health Statistics is 73.7 years. If

you are in the male category, 69.9 years. But something again is unmindful of the eternal urge for all things to be equal, so the female triumphs again. She will average it out to a hefty 77.6. Once, again, things are out of balance. The bureau also reports that white Americans can expect to live 74.4 years, while blacks average 68.3 years. Their findings show that the radical difference is dropping; the gender differential is growing.

THE WALLSTREET JOURNAL ON SOCIAL SECURITY. Consider the average American worker entering the work force in 1950. By 1980 they saw wages go up 490% and Social Security taxes skyrocket by over 2,000%. Yep: Social Security taxes have climbed even faster than federal income taxes. And they are still zooming. There's that legislated increase to 7.65% by 1990 and an estimated rate of 8.6% by 2010 just to keep the system in place. But these average Americans, along with all those over the age of 40 are lucky. They will get more out of the Social Security system than they will have put in through taxes. The unlucky ones are the generation somewhat under 40 years of age, who will get less out of it than they have put in. Michael Boskin, Stanford economist, figures that the return for their investment in old-age income security will be negative—and will grow more negative the younger they are. One estimate is that Social Security pays out some \$17,000 a minute more than it takes it.

LET'S HEAR IT FOR MRS. PAT DRISCOLL. Why? She heads up a group of volunteers in Oakland, California who has initiated a crusade to popularize virginity. They call themselves Womanity, and are an affiliate of the Family Life Center of the Diocese of Oakland (Catholic). "There are plenty of virgins among America's teenagers," says Mrs. Driscoll, "although many hide the fact or wind up going to bed with someone just so they won't be teased by their peers." Noting that "our sex-saturated society" has discriminated against "the virginal male and female,"

this new group held a day-long seminar for parents called Affirming Adolescent Abstinence.

FROM NOVEMBER AMERICAN OPINION: Among the events which could trigger a financial collapse are a panic in the money-market funds; a real-estate crash; and, a wave of corporate bankruptcies. This year the number of business failures in the U.S. has gone nearly beyond the record-level collapses that occurred during the Great Depression. So far this year through the second week of September the total business failures were 17,502, which was already the highest since 1933 when 19,859 business collapses were recorded.

FURTHER QUOTES FROM AMERICAN OPINION: The staggering level of the present Third World Debt could bring the international bankers to their knees. Mexico owes Western banks more than \$81 billion; Romania owes over \$10.2 billion; Hungary owes \$7.8 billion. Poland alone could topple the financial system by forcing a default on \$17 billion owed to Western banks.

SODOM AND GOMORRAH SEEM TO BE ALIVE AND WELL IN AMERICAN POLITICS. On September 29, 1982 there was a "gay rights" dinner at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York for the express purpose of raising "a campaign war chest to keep our enemies out of the United States Congress and to elect our allies." Their goal—\$150,000. Who were sponsors? Senators Edward Kennedy, Alan Cranston, Daniel Moynihan, New York Lt. Governor Mario Cuomo, New York Attorney General Robert Abrams, Rep. Ted Weiss, and the mayors of Washington, San Francisco, Minneapolis, Boston, and Atlanta. The keynote speaker: former Vice-President Walter Mondale. By their own admission, everyone of those sponsoring and attending that dinner were supporters of the sins of Sodom.

Christians have every reason to "Look up, for our redemption draweth near." "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."



THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

“Amazing Grace”

For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly . . . But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. (Romans 5:6, 8-10, New King James Version).

In our last meditation on the 5th chapter of Romans I quoted at the beginning the above passage without verse 9 in order to show our terrible condition before God took a hand in the matter and sent His Son to save us. This time we are looking at this passage to note these expressions: “In due time Christ died for the ungodly;” “While we were still sinners, Christ died for us;” “Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him;” “We shall be saved by His life.” The old hymn that was revived a few years ago, “Amazing Grace,” certainly struck a right chord in that pair of words! While we deserved nothing but to be cast out of His sight forever, God sent His Son to die for us, He died for us, we shall be saved from wrath through Him and saved by His life—and all done when (v. 7) we were neither righteous or good. It is no wonder that God knew He would have to give us His Holy Spirit for us to grasp and understand such wonderful, amazing truth.

Let us meditate just a short while on each of the verses quoted. First of all, then, it was while we were without any moral or spiritual strength and were lacking in reverence toward God that Christ died for us, died on our behalf, died instead of our having to die. If we had experienced physical death without His death for us, we would simply have entered into eternal death, eternal destruction from the face of God, cast out into the outer darkness into the place of eternal torment, the lake of fire, a place so awful it was not prepared for men but for the devil and his angels. Christ died for us that we would not have to share that fate. How grateful we should be and with what joy we should receive His great gift of salvation.

Verse eight then points out the remarkable way in which God set before the whole universe His love toward us. In verse seven

Paul had pointed out that we might conceive of someone (on human terms) dying for a man who was good, benevolent, kind, generous but not for the one who simply was "righteous," that is, he was, to illustrate, the kind of man who if he owed you a half penny would cut a penny in half to be sure you got exactly what was owed. For such a one obviously no one would give up his life. But God demonstrated that He loved us by Christ's dying for us when we were neither "righteous" or "good" but were sinners instead—ones who deliberately and consistently sought our own wills instead of God's will. How amazing that God would love us and give His Son to die for us without asking us first to turn from our evil ways.

At this point may I point out that you cannot excuse yourself from this picture by saying you weren't even living when Christ died for us. You would simply be forgetting that God is eternal. One of the things that means is that God looks upon future events as if they had already happened. He saw your and my obstinate going against His will long before it actually took place. He even saw it before He formed the earth!

Verse nine then points out that once God has declared us righteous (justified us) by Christ's blood, He has far more reason to save us from the wrath to come (His own wrath against sin, which was poured out on the Cross against our sin). We should get great assurance about being saved from wrath as we contemplate what He did when we were unrighteous and evil; surely He will save us whom He has declared righteous now because we have been cleansed by Christ's blood shed in our stead on the Cross.

Verse ten then introduces a wonderful subject, our reconciliation. Enemies need to be reconciled to each other. We were enemies of God by nature. He could not be reconciled to us without something being done about our sin. Christ did that on the Cross, taking our sin on Himself and taking God's wrath against sin for us. We who are Christians (and this book is written to Christians) have accepted that substitution for us that Christ died and the reconciliation is complete—God to us and we to God. That is why Paul says, "much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Christ died for us, His death saved us. Now He lives and His life is offered to us; and so our salvation will be brought to its completion when He comes again and of that we can be absolutely sure because while we were enemies "we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son." Praise His name and rejoice in that salvation. Be among those who trust Him to have completed your salvation and show that trust by being buried with Him through baptism into His death (6:4).

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

"You are not staying here. Not long. This world is not your home. Some started out to make heaven their home. And of that number are some who have forgotten where they started, have lost their pilgrim character. Floating, drifting derelicts. All such are soon caught up in the whirlpool of destruction. You cannot drift into heaven; you can drift into perdition."—Stanford Chambers

Money And The Last Days

Winston N. Allen



But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof: from these also turn away. —II Timothy 3:1-5

But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. —I Timothy 6:9, 10.

Christ and His apostles had more to say about money and things, including our attitudes toward them and use of them, than any other subject. Money talks; it tattles; it reveals our sense of values, our priorities. Obviously what the Bible says about money and things is not believed by most individuals, businesses, and governments.

Money and money systems are prominent in prophecies dealing with the end and the approaching end of this age. On every hand we see that men are “lovers of money” and “all kinds of evil” are resulting. Revelation 13:16-18 describes a cashless society under Antichrist when all buying and selling transactions will be based on a number (the mark of the beast) on the right hand or on the forehead. Revelation 18 foretells a colossal commercial collapse affecting “the merchants of the world.”

Coming events cast their shadows before them. The July, 1982, issue of *Time* in an article entitled “What In the World Is Wrong?” described the precarious position of the global economy. It is said that the economic decline could spiral out of control leading to a complete breakdown in world economy, and that the world is balanced on a knife edge that “is moving from crisis to catastrophe.”

Dr. Harry Schultz in his International Letter of July 14, 1982 wrote, “I fear a sudden big bank failure (they are always kept secret till the situation is hopeless; then it’s suddenly announced), which

results in a chain-reaction bank closure around the world within two hours. . . The risk is greater than in the 1930's . . . it's global now, and the degree of debt is greater . . . the evidence is overwhelming."

Scores of nations now are in debt. Poland alone owes 29 billion dollars. In our country the Federal debt (Federal Government Financial Liabilities) is 7.2 trillion dollars (3½ times the level of just 10 years ago).

Howard Ruff wrote, "Eventually currency reform must come—the government must shrink the currency and start over."

According to Dr. Franz Pick, 82 year old currency specialist: "A new U.S. currency was printed years ago and may now soon go into circulation." He claims that the exchange will have to be on a 100 to 1 basis—one new dollar for every 100 old dollars—in order to solve our economic problems. The new \$5.00 bills he saw were blue, the \$10.00 bills were brown, and the \$20.00 bills were red. He believes the replacement currency will be issued before the end of 1983.

Lawrence Patterson, publisher of the Patterson Strategy Letter, envisions a repudiation of debt or declaration of bankruptcy by the U.S., calling in of the currency and issuing new currency on a ratio of 10 or 20 to one.

Ed Orr, economic advisor, believes the exchange will take place after the 1982 elections and before the '84 elections, and that it will come over a weekend (no advance announcement to the public).

Dr. C.M. Ward asserts the Replacement Currency for our present money is stored in Culpepper, Virginia and is being transferred now to various banks.

Dr. Mary Stewart Relfe in her July, 1982, "Relfe's Review" states that the convertible currency will be "supposedly" backed by gold. "Either the gold will be there, or it will be only partially backed."

Dr. Dave Breese in his booklet "The Wealth by Which We Live" gives the following reasons for the current world-wide depression:

- (1) Worldwide oil price escalation by the OPEC nations.
- (2) The global arms buildup at fantastic expense (more than \$1 million a minute is being spent worldwide on the military).
- (3) Massive social welfare programs (welfare is the political base of liberalism).
- (4) Irresponsible deficit spending by government.
- (5) Inhibition of resource development.
- (6) The arrogant demands of irresponsible trade unions.
- (7) The continued economic retardation of third world nations.
- (8) Waste and corruption in government and private industry.
- (9) National and global criminal activity.
- (10) The erosion of responsibility and dedication of workers.

Dr. Breese asserts that the tap root of it all is covetousness, the unholy fever to acquire what we have not earned. In other words, financial problems are basically problems of the spirit, not being right with God. Jesus said in Luke 12:15, "Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

There is an abundance of evidence that a new money system made possible by modern technology is on the way. It will incorporate a number for every human being (EFT, the transfer of funds electronically). Willard Cantelon and Dr. David Webber have written extensive-

ly on this subject as have many others. When the system is placed in effect under antichrist, Christians will be gone. Meanwhile our responsibility and opportunity is to obey the Lord's Great Commission to take the Gospel to the whole world (this is possible by modern means of communication). The Christian and his money can be a blessed partnership in helping to publish the Word, broadcast the Word, take the Word to every person.

We are stewards of that which God has entrusted to us. Everything comes from the Lord and belongs to Him. Jesus made some tremendously important statements about money in Luke 6:38, Matthew 6:19-21, 33; and Luke 16:9-13 which you are urged to read. Irene and I have found that the more we give to the Lord's work in various parts of the world, the more we have to give. God is faithful; He keeps His promises. As one Christian said, "I keep shoveling it out; God keeps shoveling it in, but He has a bigger shovel than I have."

In keeping with Paul's statement in Romans 13:8a, "Owe no man anything save to love one another," it should be pointed out that the "buy now, pay later" cycle has placed many Christians in serious financial trouble. So often easy credit makes people uneasy later. Snap decisions made under pressure are often regretted.

In closing, money cannot buy the things that are most valuable even in this life: forgiveness, peace, faith, hope, and love. The Apostle Peter said in his first epistle (1:6 & 7): "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

It Happened In Hamburg

by Ernest Dapozzo

Ernest Dapozzo was born in Italy, married in France, and deported to Germany to a slave-labor camp in the vicinity of Hamburg. During the closing years of World War II (1944-45) this great seaport and industrial city was struggling for its very life, while Allied bombers were gradually reducing Hamburg to rubble. At first, the raiders came only at night, but as the strength of the Luftwaffe waned, the Allies grew more bold. Finally, they were appearing at any hour—and in such numbers that the defenders could not give even the ten-minute warning. In the midst of such chaos, forced laborers were still expected to complete their assigned tasks.

The author lets you share the suffering and the suspense—but he rises above mere circumstances, as one who has become "more than conqueror" through Him who loved us.

* * * * *

It Happened In Hamburg will be appearing in these pages in 1983. Watch for it. Give someone a gift subscription.

Lord of the Universe

Lord of the Universe, Hope of the world,
Lord of the limitless reaches of *space*,
Here on this planet you put on our flesh,
Vastness confined in the womb of a maid,
Born in our likeness you ransomed our race.

Lord of the Universe, Hope of the world,
Lord of the infinite eons of *time*,
You came among us, lived our brief years,
Tasted our griefs, our aloneness, our fears,
Conquered our death, made eternity ours.

Lord of the Universe, Hope of the world,
Send out Your light to the *ends of the earth*;
May we who know You obey Your command,
Go with the grace of Your gospel to all,
Bringing salvation and freedom and joy.

Lord of the Universe, Hope of the world,
How Your creation cries out for release!
Looks for you, longs for You, watches and waits,
Prays for Your kingdom of justice and peace!
Maker, Redeemer, Triumphant One, come!

Savior, we worship You, praise and adore;
Help us to honor You more and yet more,
Help us to honor You more and yet more!

—Margaret Clarkson

Gleanings

Larry Miles

WHAT IS THAT TO THEE?

How often we are concerned as to whether certain people are saved and will enjoy eternal life. We examine the validity of their baptism: whether the word uttered over them before their immersion are the correct scriptural formula: whether the one immersed understands the meaning and significance of the act; or whether the immersion was for the remission of sins. In how many cases does the person immersed understand all the meaning or appreciate the blessings attached to the ordinance? If God shall make our salvation dependent upon our knowledge, who then can be saved? Salvation is of the Lord; it is His gift. It is better to obey just what He commands, and not go beyond what is written. God is perfectly able to carry out His own business without our deciding matters for Him.

—Carlton Melling in *The Scripture Standard*

THE SUPREME FACT

Speculate on it how we may, the death of the Lord Jesus Christ is presented to us in the New Testament as the everlasting reason of every happy relation between sinful man and the moral government of God. The conscience bows before the cross and is at peace, even when the intellect is baffled and defeated in the attempt to construct a theory of atonement. "When we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," is the answer to the deepest and most agonizing distress of the heart; and the theology which ignores or evades this truth can claim neither to be in harmony with the faith of the apostles nor to interpret the grandest and most awful facts of the spiritual universe.

—R. W. Dale on "The Atonement."

OUR PLEA

We plead for the following things in these days of departure and dissension.

1. The new covenant scriptures as a revelation of the will of the absent King, and as an all sufficient rule of faith and practice.
2. A restoration of the primitive order as set forth by the apostles of Jesus, the Messiah, in its fullness and simplicity, as essential to the maintenance of a proper relationship with God the Father.
3. The one body of our Lord, composed of every immersed penitent believer in the world, as opposed to human religious parties which segregate, separate and divide the people of God.
4. The priesthood of all believers, in practice as well as theory, and the rights and prerogatives accruing to all from such a priesthood.
5. The mutual ministry of the community of saints, utilizing every talent of every member, to the glory of God and the extension of His kingdom.

—Carl Ketcherside in *Mission Messenger*

CHILDREN OF GOD

The Bible is pre-eminently occupied in setting forth the gracious feelings with which God regards the children of men; it depicts them not in the abstract, but as manifested in action. It also teaches that those who have tasted of God's grace and love and mercy are bound to exercise the same dispositions toward their fellowmen. They thus become in reality children of God, and are conformed to the nature of Him from whom their new life is drawn.

—from *Synonyms of the Old Testament*

Until next time, MARANATHA!

Foreign Missions in THESE Troubled Times?

"William Carey was pleading the cause of world missions during the French Revolution, which threatened to engulf the whole of Europe. The first American missionaries sailed for India in 1912, the year that war broke out between Britain and the United States. Hudson Taylor first arrived in China in 1853 as the Taiping Rebellion was getting under way—a rebellion that lasted fifteen years and took at least twenty million lives."—Herbert Kane, *Understanding Christian Missions*



Ancient Predictions and Current Events

Alex V. Wilson

Part II

“Above all, avoid dogmatism. None have injured the doctrine of the second coming so much as its over-zealous friends.” This advice from J. C. Ryle is very sound, as we tried to emphasize in last month’s article. Rigid dogmatism and wild speculations have too often plagued the preaching of prophecy.

Yet predictive prophecy must be important, or the Lord would not have included so much of it in the Bible. As Ryle also wrote: “Surely there can be no greater spur to the servant’s activity than the expectation of his master’s speedy return.”

Last month we saw a few signs that perhaps Christ will return soon: weapons with terribly devastating power; a boom in occultism and the appearance of Satanism; Israel back in its land with its own government: These things have happened during our present generation. Now let us look at some other events which may be significant.

O Jerusalem

In a grim unveiling of the future, Christ said, that the Jews “will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led captive among all nations; and *Jerusalem will trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled*” (Luke 21:24). From the days of Jesus until 1948, various Gentile peoples controlled Jerusalem. From 1948-1967, the new state of Israel ruled West Jerusalem but Jordan ruled East Jerusalem, the Old City part where the temple site is. But in 1967 Israel took the entire city from the Jordanians

For the first time in almost two thousand years their beloved capital city was under their control! Eagerly they hoped to rebuild their temple, even though the Muslim Dome of the Rock presently sits on the only site which the temple can occupy.

Since 1967 the Arab nations and the Palestinian Liberation Organization have demanded the East Jerusalem be returned to the kingdom of Jordan. But just during 1980 a hornet’s nest was stirred up as Israel steadfastly refused to consider letting the City be divided again. Instead Israel’s Knesset (Congress) declared that *all* of Jerusalem is the Jewish state’s *eternal* and *indivisible* capital.

Prime Minister Begin planned to set up Israel’s government building and agencies in East Jerusalem, though he later hesitated since this

move was strongly condemned by many nations and not recognized even by the U. S.

As we watch these events unfold, it seems that Jesus' prediction has come to pass during the past decade and a half. If so, we seem to be in the time of the End.

Setting the stage of antichrist

In Daniel chapter seven, the seer was given a vision of the smashing climax to human history. The Son of Man will return, wipe out the Antichrist, and set up God's kingdom in fullness of glory forever. The vision reveals the Antichrist will appear on the scene when ten kingdoms or nations share the territory of the old Roman Empire. At least this seems to me the most likely among various interpretations. Here are Daniel's words:

Out of this (fourth) kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings. He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High . . . (7:24, 25).

Can it be possible that the European Economic Community, or "Common Market," is the beginning of the revived Roman Empire over which Antichrist will rule before he proceeds to dominate the whole world? I realize that many wrong guesses have been made about this prophecy. Some saw the rise of the revived Roman Empire in the League of Nations; others in Mussolini's Italy; others in the United Nations; and others in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization! Nevertheless, it is admitted by the members of the Common Market that their economic union is meant to lead to some kind of political merger, some sort of United States of Europe.

If this situation develops, it will fit Daniel's picture more closely than any of the other guesses that have been made. And with the entrance of Greece into the Common Market it now has ten members! However, it may be that England will withdraw. Let's avoid dogmatism, but let's also keep our eyes open and prayers ascending.

All the world will hear!

Possible signs of Christ's soon return: the possibility of devastating war; widespread occultism; Israel restored to its land; all Jerusalem now under its control; a ten-nation federation set up in Europe. But the most important indication is not yet mentioned. It is most important because in it *we can play a part!*

Our Lord said, when speaking of the end of this age, "The gospel must *first* be preached to all nations" (Mark 13:10). Matthew elaborates on this statement: "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and *then* the end will come" (24:14). Before the end of the age will come, the ends of the earth must hear.

Since this is so, then world evangelization is the most pressing matter in prophecy! Not the millennium, nor the great tribulation, but missions. And though you and I really can't do anything regarding the other "signs of the times" such as war, occultism, Israel, etc.—we

can be active in world evangelism. We can pray, give, go or send. Let's do it, to bring back the King.

How near is the Church to preaching the Gospel to all people? There are still staggering needs. And yet tremendous advances are being made too.

Of the more than four billion people in the world today, it is estimated by missions' leaders that around 2½ billion have never clearly heard of salvation through Jesus Christ. Over one-half of the world's population live in Asia, yet probably fewer than 5% of Asia's people call themselves Christians of any kind. How these facts should grieve us.

Yet giant strides have been taken in proclaiming the Gospel, and opportunities were never greater. "Every week some 1500-1600 new churches are being started in various towns, cities and villiages around the world. This is simply the average rate at which the Lord is building His church around the world," states Warren Webster. He adds, "The church of Jesus Christ is more widely planted and more deeply rooted among more people than ever before in history."

Mass communications give wings to the Word. Between 1875 and 1900 it is said that the evangelist D.L. Moody spoke to more people than any president, premier, king, actor or lecturer. And yet Wilbur Smith asserted that "Billy Graham, in a single televised broadcast of one evening of his crusades, reaches more people in North America in one hour than the entire number of people to whom Mr. Moody spoke throughout his entire remarkable life."

In 1979 Oswald Sanders said, "It's estimated that by the year 2,000 there will be more Christians in the Third World than in the Old World. . . . The strategy of the Holy Spirit is seen in the rise in missionary recruitment in the Third World. There are now very nearly 5,000 missionaries doing cross-cultural missionary work from those countries.

Watch and work

Our Lord Jesus once said, "OCCUPY (that is, work) till I COME" (Luke 19:13). Commenting on this command, Raymond Cox made these observations:

The sincerest saints can become so captivated with the 666 that they forget that an unsaved world is sick, sick, sick. Some are so involved in investigating the ten toes of Daniel's image that they never use their own two feet to 'go and bring forth fruit.' They watch, but they need to occupy.

On the other hand, some become so occupied with occupying that they hardly have a thought about the 'blessed hope.' They get frustrated wondering, 'What is this world coming to?' because they forget Who is coming to this world! They want to keep their feet on the ground, and that is all right, but they fail to keep their eyes on Jesus, and that is all wrong. They occupy all right, but they need to watch.

May we during 1981 both *serve* the "living and true God, AND *wait* for his Son from heaven" (1 Thes. 1:9-10).—from **EVANGELICAL THRUST** (Manila), Feb. 1981. Used by permission.

Shattered Dreams Reclaimed

Grace Ferguson

Where are the dreams of youth? You had such great, such high and holy desires. Yet, life turned out quite differently. You wanted to be so pure, and holy, and consecrated to God. But, again, life turned out quite differently.

When and where did you permit yourself to default in conduct? God only knows how you did, when, and why.

To be true to ones self, and ones dreams required constant diligence. You cannot slack one time. If you do, your dream is marred. There is a constant barrage that must be dealt with in a most positive way. You can't be half hearted in combating Satan's attacks. You have to stand firm.

Youth has passed—it seems but yesterday, when you had such high and holy dreams for yourself. Now years have found you, some in your twenties, some in your thirties, some near forty, etc. and it would be most difficult to recognize you as the high and holy dreamer of yester-years.

You are filled with regrets, sorrow, disappointments, and in some cases shame. What can you do with all these jaded dreams; forlorn longings; broken promises; desires to erase some scenes. Wish, wish, wish, for another chance. If only you could go back, how different your life would be.

Stop! Stop!! Stop!!! Hold it. Surely you have learned much, and you now have the courage, and strength to do right. So you can from here on be what you desired, and wished to be in your youth.

Remember once sin is confessed, God's word promises:

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
(I John 1:9)

Again:

Let your manner of life be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. (Heb. 13:5)

Praise God for His wonderful care and keeping. Praise God for His great cleansing power in the blood of Jesus Christ. Praise God for His boundless love, which includes even me!! God, the great Creator, The Eternal One, will cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Shout praises! Shout Hallelujahs! for God alone can do this. O! praise, praise, praise God for His wonderful care.

Surely with such a mighty God as ours, we can be fully assured of victory from here on; walking triumphantly down life's pathway with the God of all mercies.



Studies in the Book of Acts

Larry Miles

Stephen Gives The Sanhedrin A History Lesson Acts 7:1-60

THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM: ACTS 7:1-8

Stephen's sermon or history lesson is the longest recorded message in the Book of Acts. Verse 1 finds Stephen being tried by the Sanhedrin on the trumped up charge of blasphemy. The high priest wanted to know if the charges against Stephen were true. He asked Stephen that question in Acts 7:1. As Stephen begins his defense in verse 2, we see him take a fairly different approach than most. Here, Stephen was on trial for his life, and instead of trying to defend himself, we see him, in a sense, putting the Sanhedrin on trial. He then proceeds to give them a history lesson based on their past. Starting in verse 2 he opens with the life of Abraham.

In the Gospels we have two genealogies given of the Lord Jesus Christ. The one in Matthew's account, which was written to Jews, goes back only as far as Abraham. The one in Luke, written to Gentiles goes back to Adam and then to God Himself. When the Jews traced their history as a people, they went back to the father of their nation, Abraham.

In verse 2 Stephen tells us that the glory of God appeared to Abraham and in verse 3 told him to leave his homeland and "come into a land that I will show you." Verse 4 informs us that Abraham left his home in the land of the Chaldeans. Abraham did not know where he was going but was willing to trust God. The Hebrew writer in Heb. 11:8 alludes to this fact. "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going."

In verse 5 we are told that Abraham did not receive any of the land of Canaan for his own ownership. The only land that he owned was a field with a cave he purchased for a burial place (Gen. 23:1ff). The land was promised for his offspring. When the promise was made, Abraham had no children. But he believed God's promise. In verse 6 God told Abraham that his offspring would be enslaved in a foreign land for 400 years. This is the prophecy of the bondage in Egypt. Verse 7 says that the nation they would be in bondage to would be judged by God. After the judgment of Egypt, the Children of Israel were to serve God in Canaan. Verse 8 tells us of the covenant of circumcision. It also introduces us to the patriarchs.

This section shows us that Abraham was a man of hope. He was always willing to look to God to keep His word. He was always looking forward to be ready to do God's will. He was not like the Sanhedrin, living in the past and clinging to the past. He was always ready to answer God's call.

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH: ACTS 7:9-19

Stephen has told the Sanhedrin about the faithful life of Abraham who was willing to live by faith. In verse 8 he introduced the patriarchs. In the verse we are studying we have the account of the life of Joseph. Verse 9 tells us that the patriarchs became jealous of Jacob's favoritism toward Joseph. They sold him into slavery and told Jacob that he had been killed by a wild beast. Stephen brings out the fact that what was meant for evil God turned to good. God was with Joseph in Egypt.

Joseph's brothers had meant evil but God overruled. They knew that he would end up in slavery in Egypt. They thought he would be mistreated. But Jehovah God was with Joseph, even in the land of Egypt. Verse 10 tells us that God granted that Joseph be favored by Pharaoh. Joseph became the second-in-command in the land of Egypt.

In verse 11 we have the famine Joseph said would take place happening. Verse 12 informs us that Jacob, upon hearing that there was grain in Egypt, sent 10 of his sons there to buy grain. Joseph made himself known to them on their second journey to the land of Egypt. Verse 14 reveals to us that Joseph, acting on authority from Pharaoh, invited the patriarchs to settle in Egypt. Verse 15 tells us that Jacob and his family came to live in the land of Egypt. Jacob lived out his years and died in Egypt. In time all of the patriarchs died. In verse 16 they were buried in the land of their fathers.

This section shows that God was not bound to a certain area. He was with Joseph even in the land of Egypt. William Barclay, in *The Daily Study Bible Series: Acts of the Apostles*, had this to say,

The picture of Abraham is succeeded by the picture of Joseph. The key to Joseph's life is summed up in his own saying in Genesis 50:20. At that time his brothers were afraid that, after the death of Jacob, Joseph would take vengeance on them for what they had done to him. Joseph's answer was 'As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good.' Joseph was the man for whom seeming disaster turned to triumph. Sold into Egypt as a slave, wrongfully imprisoned, forgotten by the men he had helped, the day yet came when he became prime minister of Egypt. Stephen sums up the characteristics of Joseph in two words—grace and wisdom. . . . Once again the contrast is there. The Jews were lost in the contemplation of their own past and imprisoned in the mazes of their own law. But Joseph welcomed each new task, even if it was a rebuff, and adopted God's view of life.

In verse 17 we're reminded of the promise to Abraham that his offspring would be in bondage. All through the life of Joseph they enjoyed great favor with the rulers of Egypt. The children of Israel multiplied and increased in population. In verse 18 we're told that there arose a new king that cared nothing about Joseph. Who was this new king? J. W. McGarvey had this to say,

The Shepherd kings were asiatic semites who had invaded Egypt many

years before and naturally favored the family of Joseph. The other king that arose was most likely one of pure Egyptian blood, who displaced the sovereignty of the Hyksos rulers and reestablished the Thebian kings."

Gareth L. Reese, in his book, *New Testament History: Acts*, had this to say,

The Hebrew idiom means 'not caring for.' It can hardly be supposed that the verb is to be taken literally, i.e., that Pharaoh literally knew nothing of the name and deeds of Joseph. This expression therefore must be understood as meaning he did not show special favor to the people of Joseph. Because of the change of dynasties, the promises of the Shepherd kings of another generation were ignored and the contracts made were deliberately broken by the new Pharaoh. Whenever there is a revolution, gratitude for great deeds done by the leaders who are thrown out of power is forgotten. The old class of favored people is often oppressed by the new government.

MOSES

Stephen now tells the Sanhedrin something about the character of this new Pharaoh. He tells them how this Pharaoh mistreated the people. He tells of Pharaoh's cruelty against the people. It was in this dreadful time that Moses was born. Verse 20 says that he was lovely in the sight of God. Moses was hidden and kept in his mother's home for three months. This was in direct disobedience to the commands of Pharaoh. Pharaoh had decreed that all male children be put to death. Verse 21 tells us how Pharaoh's daughter came to find Moses. It tells us how she brought him up as her own son. Verse 22 informs us that he was brought up learning the knowledge of the Egyptians. Before Moses fled Egypt, he was a man of power in words and deeds.

In verse 23, Moses is nearing forty years of age. This verse tells us that Moses thought it best to go and visit with his brethren. In verse 24 he saw one of them being mistreated by an Egyptian. Moses then killed the Egyptian thinking his people would see that he was trying to help them. Verse 25 tells us this. He thought that they would realize that he had come to deliver them from Egyptian bondage. Verse 26 tells us that the very next day Moses saw two of the children of Israel fighting and tried to intercede. He asked them why they were fighting. They told him it was none of his business. Verse 27 tells of their rebuke. Verse 28 shows that they saw him when he killed the Egyptian the day before. Moses must have thought that no one saw him do that evil deed. Verse 29 says that Moses fled the land of Egypt. Verse 29 further states that Moses sojourned in the land of Midian where he married and fathered two sons. This section ends with Moses trying to aid his people and them rejecting him. God's people had rejected the messengers of God all through the Old Covenant times. It was just as the Sanhedrin was doing at the present time during the life of Stephen.

MOSES RETURNS TO EGYPT TO LEAD THE EXODUS: ACTS 7:30-41

The Record here in Acts simply says that 40 years had taken place. By reading the Book of Exodus, we are told of the events that took place in the life of Moses. History tells us that the Pharaoh whom Moses fled had died. Moses is now 80 years of age. The time had

come for God to bring about the plans to free His people from Egyptian bondage. Verse 30 gives us the account of the burning bush. Just like you and I would do Moses marvelled at the sight. It is not natural for a bush to be on fire and not be consumed. But it happened then. The God we serve is all powerful and can control the elements of nature. In verse 31 Moses went a little closer to see what was happening. It was at this time that the voice of Jehovah God began speaking to him. Verse 32, proves, without a shadow of a doubt, that Jehovah God is eternal. He was not only the God of the living, here He says He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Record then informs us that Moses shook with fear. I'm sure that you and I would do the same. In verse 33 God tells Moses that he is standing on holy ground and to remove his shoes.

In verse 34, the Father reassures Moses that He has been aware of the oppression of the Children of Israel in Egypt. He says that He has heard their groans. He informs Moses that the time has come for deliverance. God says that He is going to send Moses. Stephen is referring to Exodus 3:7-10.

Forty years earlier the people had rejected and disowned Moses, saying, "Who made you a ruler and a judge." God now is sending Moses to be both a ruler and a deliverer.

In verse 36, Stephen refers to the deliverance of the Children of Israel from Egyptian bondage. He also refers to the Exodus. He refers to the Red Sea and also to the forty years of wanderings in the wilderness. In the 37th verse Stephen is referring to a speech made by Moses to the sons of Israel which is recorded in Deuteronomy 18:15-18. It was in this passage that Moses looked forward to and gave the prophecy that God would raise up the Messiah. One of the charges against Stephen was that he was blaspheming Moses. Here we see that he holds Moses in high esteem and it was the Sanhedrin, in their rejection of Jesus, were the ones who were opposing Moses.

Verse 38 refers to the "ekklesia" in the wilderness. It is a Greek word that we have translated church. But this is referring to an event in the Old Testament. There was no church before the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The New American Standard gives the proper translation of ekklesia. It is translated as congregation. Perhaps the term church, even today is a misnomer. A better rendering might be community.

Here in verse 38, the fact is brought forth that God was with His people wherever they were. He was not confined to a certain locale. In verse 39 we find that the people were disobedient to God and wanted to go back to Egypt. In verse 40 they even stooped to idolatry. This is the account of the golden calf. (Exodus 32)

THE CONTINUING DISOBEDIENCE OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL: ACTS 7:42-50

In verse 42, Stephen refers back to the prophet Amos. He says that God gave them up to the hosts of heaven. Concerning this verse, William Neil had this to say about verse 42-43,

The host of heaven: the narrative of the Exodus in the O. T. makes no reference to the Israelites having worshipped sun, moon and stars during their

wanderings, but Jeremiah (19:13) accuses the people of his day of having been guilty of this type of idolatry. Paul also echoes this Jewish idea, that the punishment for sin is that the sinner is allowed to sink into even deeper sinfulness (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28).

The book of the prophets: is the collection of the oracles of the twelve minor prophets. The quotation is from Amos 5:25-27, where the prophet, denouncing the traffic in religion in his day, points to the contrast between the austere, simple faith and practice of the Exodus wanderings and the elaborate sacrificial rites that became the essence of Israel's worship. The second half of the quotation in Amos is a prophecy that the Israelites will be banished beyond Damascus, carrying their Assyrian idols with them. Stephen, however, takes the Amos passage to mean a condemnation of Israel for not worshipping the true God in the wilderness as Moses had enjoined them, but for practicing idolatry instead.

Concerning the two gods mentioned, James Burton Coffman, in his commentary on Acts, published by *Firm Foundation*, has this to say, 'Moloch'—This old god of the ammonites was worshipped at Mari about 1800 B.C. and was associated with the sacrifice of children in the fire. Solomon built a high place for this god on a hill east of Jerusalem (1 Kings 11:7); Ahafi burned his children (2 Chron. 28:3), and Mannasseh did the same (2 Kings 21:6); and Samaria was judged for this sin (2 Kings 17:17).

Concerning verse 44, Charles Caldwell Ryrie, in the Ryrie Study Bible, has this to say, "Tabernacle of testimony, i. e. the tabernacle was a testimony to the presence of God in their midst."

Verse 45 continues the rebellion of the Children of Israel from the time of Joshua, who led the people into the land, to the time of King David.

Verse 46 informs us that King David found favor in God's sight and desired to build a permanent dwelling place for the God of Jacob. We know that according to verse 47, that it was Solomon who built the temple. Verse 48 brings out the fact that God is not bound by time and space. He is not confined to a certain locale. He does not dwell in houses made by human hands. Stephen, in verse 49, quotes from Is. 66:1. In verse 50 God says "Was it not My Hand which made all these things." This is from Isa. 66:2. Stephen has completed most of the lesson. He has brought the Sanhedrin through the history of the Jewish people. He has shown, in this last section, that they were continually being rebellious.

STEPHEN INDICTS THE SANHEDRIN FOR THE DEATH OF JESUS: ACTS 7:51-53

Now we have come to the conclusion of the history lesson that Stephen has been presenting. He has presented his case or defense, now comes the time to strike the telling blow. He has been talking about the past, but now he gets down to addressing the present. In verse 51 he tells the Sanhedrin that they, like their predecessors have been guilty of resisting the Holy Spirit. Then, in verse 52, he asks, which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? Stephen then accuses them of killing those who announced the coming of the Righteous One. He then gets to the crux of the matter. He accuses them of murdering the Christ. According to verse 53, they received the law but did not keep it. What would the Sanhedrin do? How would they react to this?

THE STONING OF STEPHEN: ACTS 7:54-60

The Sanhedrin did not want to hear these words. In verses 55-56,

Stephen is given a glimpse of glory. In verse 56, "Son of Man," this is the only place in the Bible where this term is used except by Jesus Christ Himself. The Sanhedrin had heard enough. They stopped up their ears. Verse 57 tells us that they rushed upon him. In verse 58-60 we have the stoning of Stephen. The Sanhedrin, at this time, did not have the authority to sentence someone to death. That authority remained in the hands of the Romans. Although the Sanhedrin did not get the authority to execute Stephen they nonetheless committed this evil deed. They went through the formalities as if it was a legal execution, but in reality, it was a lynch mob murdering another servant of the Most High God. In verse 58, we have the first mention of Saul, who later became Paul the Apostle.

In verse 59, we have the actual stoning of Stephen. Stephen said, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." They continued to hurl the stones. Stephen prayed "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" This reminds us of the death of Jesus Christ. He then fell asleep.

James Burton Coffman had this to say in concluding the 7th Chapter of Acts.

'He fell asleep . . .' Taking their cue from what Jesus had said regarding the sleep of Lazarus and that of the daughter of Jairus, the Christians quickly adopted this euphemism for death. It is not so much the superficial resemblances between ordinary sleep and the sleep of death, but the pledge of the resurrection which illuminates this beloved metaphor. Upon the gravestones of two millennia, the believing community of the saints in Christ have engraved upon the tombs of their beloved dead the sacred words, 'Asleep in Jesus!'

Please read the 8th chapter of Acts in preparation for the next lesson. It will be called "The Spread of the Gospel in Judea and in Samaria."

Until next time, **MARANATHA!**

Edited by Dr. Horace E. Wood

The Gospel of John

"Rivers of Living Water"

S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.

John 7:32-52

There is high drama in one of the central statements of this section of Scripture. In the last day, the great day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus stood amidst the multitudes present at the festival, at which was celebrated, among other things, the occasion upon which Moses by divine enablement struck the rock and gave Israel water for their thirst, and cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:37-38).

John followed with a word of interpretation, "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy

Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (v. 39).

The high drama of the occasion consisted largely in the fact that Jesus in effect was making the majestic claim to be the antitype of the rock that supernaturally was the source of Israel's deliverance from thirst (and murmuring). In other words, He was the rock (cf. 1 Cor. 10:4).

There is no certainty about this, but it is likely that Jesus' invitation was connected with the drawing of water from the Pool of Siloam. On each of the days of the Feast of Tabernacles a priest would fill a golden pitcher with water from the pool. Accompanied by a solemn procession, he would return to the temple area and amid the sounding of trumpets and the shouting of the rejoicing people the water would be poured through a funnel, which led to the base of the altar of burnt offering. Godet has pointed out that the people were in a jubilant mood, and that the rejoicing was so great that the rabbis used to say that he who had never been present at this ceremony, and at the other similar ceremonies by which this feast was distinguished, did not know what real rejoicing meant. The ceremony not only reminded the nation of the water from the rock in Moses' day; it also pointed forward to the spiritual blessings of the Messianic Age (cf. Zech. 14:16-21).

The minds and hearts of the people present in the city were occupied with such texts as, "Therefore with joy shall you draw water from the wells of salvation" (cf. Isa. 12:3), a passage in the context of the blessings of the age. They had in their right hands a branch of myrtle, a willow twig, and a bough of the palm, and in their left hands a citron or similar fruit, in their procession. The desert-life of the nation was passing in review, so that the festival resembled a historical pageant.

And just when their minds were filled with such things, the water from the rock looming large in their hearts, Jesus stood and claimed to be the One of whom the ancient facts spoke. It was high drama, and a majestic claim on His part.

There is another thing about the occasion that stands out beside the drama of it. It is the depth of the spiritual truth represented by the claim of our Lord. In effect, He was claiming to be the One who can meet all the dominant desires that surge up in men's souls,—the heart calling out for love, the whole nature feeling somewhat blindly and often desperately after something external to itself, which it can grasp, and in which it can feel satisfied. Like a plant growing in a cellar, with feeble and whitened limbs seeking the light it needs, so every man carries about within himself a whole host of longing desires, which ought to find some support around which they may entwine themselves, and on which they can rest.

The Scriptures make it plain that these feelings after God are inevitably resisted and suppressed until deliverance comes by the efficacious grace of the Holy Spirit. That is the curse of human bondage to sin. He stifles his longings, misreading many of them and ignoring others of nobler kind. How tragic and pathetic! We

do not know what we want outside of Christ, and there is something touching and moving, almost heartrending, about the endless effort to fill up the heart by a multitude of diverse and small things, when all the time we suppress the aspirations, the deep yearnings, longings, unrest, that should lead to the cry, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God" (cf. *Psa. 42:1-2*). All of these things can be so fully satisfied in the Savior God has provided.

In the central words of the passage we have Christ's view of humanity. It "thirsts," when moved by the Spirit of God, for something that it does not have of itself. And, then, secondly, we have Christ's view of Himself. Men are to come to Him for satisfaction. And, finally, we have Christ's invitation to humanity in His words, "let him come unto me" (cf. 37-38). It is to these things that we now turn in our studies in John, chapter seven.

THE REVELATION OF HIS DEPARTURE

The Pharisees were hearing of the discussions that were taking place among the people concerning this man Jesus, who was from Galilee of the Gentiles. There were many believing in Him, and many were convinced that He was doing the works that would be done by the Messiah, when He came. John writes, "And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" (cf. v. 31).

The response of the Pharisees was to send officers to arrest Him. Off the men went to seize Him. Jesus was engaging in discourses with the people at the time, and among the things that He was saying were these words, "Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come" (cf. vv. 33-34).

The response of the Lord is a reference to His ascension and then to the frustration of the nation over that. The reference to His ascension is found in the words, "Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me" (v.33). Of course, included in His words as necessary preludes to His ascension is His coming death and resurrection.

The reference to the frustration of the nation is found in the words of verse thirty-four, "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come."

The despair of these last words is reminiscent of the despair of Esau and the stolen blessing. It is the despair that comes over lost privileges and opportunities. One thinks of Isaac's refusal to change the blessing of Jacob, because he saw that represented the providential will of God, and of Esau's response, "And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father" (*Gen. 27:34*). And the words of verse thirty-eight also come to mind, "And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept."

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, commenting on the matter, has written, "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as

Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance (that is, in Jacob), though he sought it carefully with tears" (Heb. 12:16-17).

Such has been the pathetic history of Israel since the time of the cross, a seeking and a seeking, and a not finding. He came and they, not recognizing Him, rejected Him. "And the door was shut" (cf. Matt. 25:10), Jesus said in one of His parables, a saying that echoes eerily down through the centuries. "Each time that Christ makes appeal to us, and especially each time we are moved, and convinced, and drawn to him, and nothing positive happens, but it all ends in stubborn refusal or evaporates in empty feeling and emotion," a modern commentator contends, "each time that we leap to our feet, meaning to clinch things here and now, and then sit down again—each time it grows less and less likely that anything will ever come of it in us. Theseus and Pirithous went boldly into the underworld on a gallant adventure; but sitting down to rest, they dallied, to discover to their horror that they could not rise, for they had grown fast to the rocks. It was a real saint of God who cried to him in agony that he could not repent, could not make progress in the spiritual life: 'Now I can not, because once I would not.'" Without agreeing with every sentiment here, it can be rightly said that the Bible does proclaim the solemn doctrine of retributive judgment.

The words of our Lord only puzzle the Jews (cf. vv. 35-36).

THE REVELATION REGARDING THE SPIRIT

The invitation of the Lord (John 7:37). Here begins the final section of John's account of the things that transpire on the Feast of Tabernacles (cf. 7:1-8:59). The temporal expression, "in the last day," indicates that.

In the following paragraphs John will present Jesus as the true fountain (vv. 37-52), as the true light (8:12-20), and as the true Messiah (vv. 21-29), concluding with emphasis on the terrible character of Jewish unbelief (vv. 30-59).

We turn now to the dramatic statement of the Lord to the multitudes celebrating the feast. First comes the invitation, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (v. 37).

In the word, "thirst," *aspiration* is stressed (cf. Matt. 5:6). It is said that Sir James Stephen, in an address to young men, remarked, "I can put all my suggestions in the one word, 'aspire.'" That is a great word, and it is nowhere greater than in the context of aspiration for eternal life.

The conditional clause puts the statement in the form of a general truth.

The verb, "come," emphasizes the idea of *approach*, for it is not enough to aspire. That is to be followed by a drawing nigh to Christ.

And the climactic word is "drink," a word of *appropriation*. It is one of the illustrations of the matchless grace of Christ that He gives this invitation, when He knows full well how the nation has rejected

Him. The invitation, nevertheless, goes out, and it still is proclaimed by the word of God (cf. Isa. 55:1).

The explanation of the Lord (John 7:38). In the following verse there is a word of explanation, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." The word "believeth" is clearly to be equated with coming and drinking (cf. 6:35, 47, 54).

There are different ways of punctuating verse thirty-eight, and for these possibilities I would refer the reader to the commentaries. In a study of this length it is impossible to give the details. Another problem, but related to the punctuation, is the reference of the word "his" in this verse. Does it refer to Christ or to the believer? Some urge a reference to Christ, since He is the source of the living water, and it is difficult to find another passage that speaks of the believer as the source. We would normally take the "his" to refer to the nearest possible antecedent, and that seems to be "he that believeth on me." Further, there is nothing wrong with seeing the believer as the mediate source of divine blessing, while recognizing that Christ is the ultimate source. One thinks of John 8:12, where Christ is said to be the light of the world, and of Ephesians 5:8, where believers are said to be "light in the Lord," or especially of Matthew 5:14, where Jesus says believers are also "the light of the world." He is the ultimate source of light; we are a mediate source through Him.

The expression, "rivers of living waters" is a reference to the incident in Exodus 17, where Moses smote the rock and water came out for the complaining Israelites, and in Numbers twenty, where Moses smote the rock, instead of speaking to the rock, and yet water still was supplied for the thirsty. In other words, He is the true rock, and He is the supplier of His people's every need.

The words, "as the scripture hath said," have been discussed at length by the commentators. There is no precise statement to the effect in the Old Testament, but there are many places where the scriptural idea is found (cf. Exod. 17:1-7; Num. 20:11; Isa. 12:3; Zech. 14:8; Isa. 55:1; 58:11, etc.). In other words, the reference is the broad and general teaching of the Old Testament.

Our Lord's words might be paraphrased in this way, "You are having great joy celebrating the provision of water from the rock in Horeb and anticipating the Messianic waters of the provision of the Holy Spirit. But I say to you that if you really are thirsting for such blessing, come to Me. I am the spiritual rock that followed Israel. From Me the waters *came*. From Me the waters *will come*. And I shall not only quench your thirst, but in consequence of your union with Me by faith rivers of living water from the Spirit shall flow through you to others! All of this is according to Scripture." The man, then, who trusts Christ becomes like the Christ whom he trusts (cf. 1 Pet. 2:4-5, "also"). The divine gift is channeled through believers.

The interpretation of John (John 7:39). John now interprets the significance of the Lord's words, pointing out that He was speaking of the Holy Spirit, which believers would receive following the glorification of Christ. There are two important things to note.

First, the statement of John effectively refutes all second works of grace, or views that the Holy Spirit in the present age does not indwell permanently every believer in Christ. It is clearly John's intention to make plain that all believers receive the Holy Spirit, and there is no additional requirement to surrender after salvation for the presence of the Spirit in the believer's life (cf. Acts 10:44-48; Eph. 1:13-14).

Second, John also makes the point that the Spirit "was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." Literally he says the Spirit was not yet, the word "given" being added by the translators, but the idea is surely in John's mind. The Spirit was active in Old Testament times, and in that sense *He was*. In the sense of the third person of the Triune God *He always was*. Thus, John is referring to the sense in which He is in the present age. Acts one and two make it plain that He came on the Day of Pentecost in a new way into the affairs. He was the gift of the Father and the Son for work in the application of the redemption of the Son during the age in which we live. The glorification of Christ was necessary, for His glorification was the necessary prelude, or condition, for the gift of the Spirit. His coming was the climax of the redemptive program of the Father and the Son. It was an event to which the Old Testament looked forward. Put simply, Calvary is the necessary prelude to Pentecost (cf. Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5, 8; 2:1-4, 38-39, etc.)

The sentence raises the question, "Did not the Spirit indwell believers in the Old Testament times?" We certainly can agree that believers were regenerated then. Does it necessarily follow, as some contend, that they were indwelt by the Spirit then? It must also be admitted that the Old Testament does speak of the Spirit being "in" some of the Old Testament saints. Without a lengthy explanation, I believe it can be shown that in the Old Testament such expressions were related to the Spirit's enduement with power for official and special functions (cf. the construction of the Tabernacle and Bezaleel, Exod. 31:1-6, etc.)

The thing that distinguishes the Spirit's work today is His *permanent indwelling* of every believer and, thus, His *permanent individual presence*. The New Testament makes that plain in such passages as John 7:38, the one we are looking at, when compared with 14:16-17 (cf. Acts 19:1-7). Further, why would our Lord say that it was expedient that He go away, in order that the Spirit might come to the apostles and disciples, if He were already present in the same permanent way with believers (cf. John 16:7)? In addition, Paul makes it very plain in Galatians 3:23-4:7 that the sending of the Holy Spirit into the hearts of believers is based upon and grounded in the adult status of believers, and in that section he points out that that status was not attained until the Son had come and completed His atoning work. Therefore, the Old Testament saint could not have been indwelt permanently by the Spirit, nor could he have entered into his destined inheritance (cf. Gal. 4:4-7). Calvary is the necessary prelude to Pentecost and its blessings, including the permanent indwelling of believers in this age.

To sum up this section, our Lord makes it plain that He is to the

people of God what the invisible and spiritual Rock that accompanied the Israelites in the wilderness desert had been to them (cf. 1 Cor. 10:4). He then said, "I will stand upon the rock . . . and the waters shall flow" (cf. Exod. 17:6; John 7:37, "stood"). He does even more now, for He not only quenches the thirst of believers, He makes rivers of living water flow from them, satisfying their thirst and that of others, too.

Thus, in chapter two He is seen as the True Temple, in chapter three as the True Brazen Serpent, in chapter six as the True Manna, in chapter seven as the True Rock, in chapter eight as the True Light-Giving Cloud, and in chapter nineteen as the True Passover Lamb.

THE REACTION UPON THE MULTITUDE

The reactions of our Lord's words were mixed. Many of the multitude said, "Of a truth this is the Prophet," that is, the one that Moses had promised (cf. Deut. 18:15-18). Others said, "This is the Christ." Some had doubts, however, and replied, "Shall Christ come out of Galilee?"

The last group attempted to support their doubts from Scripture, affirming, "Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" (cf. v. 42).

"So," John declares, "there was a division among the people because of him" (v. 43).

Some wished to seize Him but, John adds, "no man laid hands on him," no doubt because, as he said above, "his hour was not yet come" (cf. vv. 44, 30).

THE RETURN OF THE MISSION

The request of the chief priests and Pharisees (John 7:45). The officers sent out to arrest the Lord returned to the leaders who asked, "Why have ye not brought him?"

The reply of the officers (John 7:46). The simple rejoinder came, "Never man spake like this man." One remembers the description of those who heard him in the synagogue at Nazareth, "And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" (Luke 4:22). The psalmist in the great Messianic forty-fifth psalm also spoke of Him in this way, "Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee forever" (cf. Psa. 45:2). Or, as we often sing in our meetings,

"Majestic sweetness sits enthroned
Upon the Saviour's brow;
His head with radiant glories crowned,
His lips with grace o'erflow."

The retort of the priests and Pharisees (John 7:47-49). The leaders' retort in many respects is a comical one, for they say, "Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed?" (cf. vv. 47-49). In the first place, their reply is a very confident one, the words

in the original expecting a negative reply being probably better rendered as in the NASB, "No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he?" Of course, Nicodemus is on the way to faith, if he has not yet arrived, and Joseph of Arimathaea is also a believer (cf. 19:38-39). In chapter twelve, verse forty-two, it is specifically said, "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue." They did not even know what was happening under their very noses?

Further, they accuse the people of ignorance of the Law of Moses, The Law, they thought was against Him, but in reality the Law and the Prophets supported Him, setting out in many provable details important landmarks in His life and ministry (cf. Mic. 5:2; Dan. 9:24-27, etc.).

Their thought seems to be this: Questions about the Messiah are for "the experts," and not for the common people, a mistake that many scholars often make. Someone has said, "An expert is any little old spurt away from home!" Others have a different definition, "To define an expert one must remember that 'x' is nothing, and that a 'spurt' is a drip under pressure." Nicholas Murray Butler said, "An expert is one who knows more and more about less and less." That may have been the status of the leaders, and the "less and less" did not include the Messianic passages of the Old Testament.

The response of Nicodemus (John 7:50-51). Nicodemus, unintentionally perhaps, exposed their ignorance of the Law by reminding them, "Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" Of course, it did not and, thus, the Law, which they thought was for them, was really against them. Confucius say, "Man who small potatoe get in stew," and that ancient maxim finds another fulfillment here.

The reply of the priests and Pharisees (7:52.) They can only say, "You are not also from Galilee, are you?" (the Greek negative particle expects the negative answer). They add, "Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." They were seriously wrong, and their reply illustrates how passion often judges attempts at impartiality. They were wrong on two accounts here. In the first place, Jonah was a prophet from Galilee. And second, the Lord was from Judaea, so far as his birth was concerned, but they were so sure of themselves and hostile to Him that they never bothered to find out the facts. In one sense, of course, it might also be said that He, the Messiah, was from Galilee, for He grew up there, and the prophecy of Isaiah 9:1-2 referred to Him and located the light-giving power of His ministry in Galilee.

I shall conclude with just a few comments. And, first, one notices that in the central statement of verses thirty-seven and thirty-eight the invitation to receive the Spirit's ministry and be a channel of it to others is universal. It is, "If any man thirst."

The invitations of the Bible are generally universal. Some believers find it difficult to square this with the eternal election of some to salvation, thinking that, if some are elect, then why preach? They little realize that God has elected His people to salvation through the

preaching of the Word, through the witnessing of the saints, and through prayer.

Mr. Spurgeon has replied to the objection in this interesting way, "Captious and cavilling persons will object, 'You say that God loves His people, and therefore they will be saved; then what is the good of preaching? *What is the good of preaching?* When I say that God loves a multitude that no man can number, a countless host of the race of men, do you ask me what is the good of preaching?"

"*What is the good of preaching?* To fetch these diamonds of the Lord out of the dunghill; to go down to the depths, as the diver does, to fetch up God's pearls from the place where they are.

"*What is the good of preaching?* To cut down the good corn, and gather it into the garner.

"*What is the good of preaching?* To fetch God's elect from the ruins of the fall, and make them stand on the rock of Christ Jesus, and see their standing sure.

"Ah, ye who ask what is the good of preaching, because God has ordained *some* to salvation, we ask you whether it would not be a most foolish thing to say, because there is to be a harvest, what is the good of sowing? There is to be a harvest, what is the use of reaping? The very reason why do we sow and reap is, because we feel assured that there is to be a harvest.

"And if, indeed, I believed there was not a number who must be saved, I could not go into a pulpit again. Only once make me think that no one is certain to be saved and I do not care to preach. But now I know that a countless number must be saved; I am confident that Christ 'shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days.' I know that, if there is much to dispirit me in my ministry, and I see but little of its effects, yet He shall keep all whom the Father has given to Him; and this makes me preach."

We must remember that Jesus said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me **THROUGH THEIR WORD**" (17:20).

The fact that Jesus "stood and cried" indicates an intense longing that men come to Him (cf. 18:40; 19:6, 12, 15). And all may come,—the atheists, the agnostics, the idolaters, the disappointed and discouraged, the defeated, the proud, the over-bearing, the foul, the cheats, the weary, the sad, the weak and the hopeless. Come! Come today! for He is today the possessor of the same consciousness of power to impart life.

The appropriation is of a *person*, for we are to come to Him. "Let him come unto *ME*," Jesus said. Leave the king's palace with the servants and seek the King! Only He can say such things as, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise!" (cf. Luke 7:14; John 11:43).

There is a wonderful old story of a true saint of God who was in her declining years. She knew great sections of the Bible by heart and loved to repeat them from memory to gain strength from them. But as the years came and went her memory gradually went, too. She lost the power to recall what she had stored in her mind. She would sit by a

big sunny window in her living room, repeating over one text she remembered, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." By and by part of that left her, but she quietly continued to repeat, "that which I have committed to Him." Finally, in the last few weeks of her life her family would notice her lips moving and, thinking she might need something, they would go over to her and bend down to listen for her request. Time and again they heard the old saint saying over and over again to herself the same one word, "Him—HimHim." She had lost the whole Bible but that one word, but in that one word she had the whole of the Bible. It all concerns Him.

The appropriation, of course, must be *personal*. It is "*he that cometh to me.*" Come and drink! What would we have thought of Moses and the Israelites if, needing water, they had refused to drink from the rock? Come and drink! Then sing with others who have come and have drunk,

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Behold, I freely give
The living water, thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live.'
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream!
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him."

NEWS AND NOTES

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

I wish to continue receiving the *W & W*. So please find enclosed check for \$5. Recent issues have been very thought provoking, Please continue!

Kevin Tincher

Please renew our subscription to the *Word and Work*. My family and I have moved to Schweinfurt, Germany and miss the Christian fellowship of the Church of Christ in the Louisville area. The *Word and Work* is such a spiritual blessing—can't wait from month to month to receive it. There is not much spiritual encouragement for Christians in Germany so Christian literature is such a blessing, specially the *Word & Work*. Please continue this good work of the Lord. Enclosed is our new address.

William T. Reeves III
USMAC DEH
Schweinfurt, Germany
APO NY O9033

I don't want to miss it. It is due in October.

Mrs. T. E. Daniels

To Robert Heid:

I fully agree with your article in the Sept. issue, concerning the condensed revision of the Bible, being printed by the *READER'S DIGEST* magazine!

Although I am a *READER'S DIGEST* subscriber, I will certainly never buy a condensed version of any Bible.

Your Friend,
Lyle LaMaster

Dear Brethren,

I have in my possession a borrowed copy of *The Word & Work*, the March, 1980 issue—therefore it must be returned to the person who gave it to me to look at. This particular issue contained an article by Dr. David R. Reagan entitled, "*Have the Old Testament 'Restoration' Prophecies Been Fulfilled?*"

This was the fifth in a series of five articles being written by Dr. Reagan in response to an attack on Pre-Millennial doctrine by Guy N. Woods. It is my desire to have all five issues that would, of course, contain all five articles. Then, I would appreciate the opportunity to receive all back issues of this current publishing year—1982, January thru September.

And finally, I would like to begin a subscription for the opportunity to receive the monthly issues as they are presently published. Hopefully, this can begin immediately so that the first issue that I would receive would be the October issue—preventing me from missing a single issue.

—Douglas E. Miller, Springfield, Ohio

I look forward to the W & W each month. Especially like Dr. Reagan's articles. Keep up the good work.

Mrs. Opal P. Rust

My Dear Friends: This may be my last subscription—I hit the 80 mark the 21st day of May, 1982 A.D.

I sincerely hope that our LORD will come, I had rather go by translation than by the resurrection. Not my will but HIS be done.

Roe Miller

We take this opportunity at the close of 1982 to thank our many contributors—both small and large—to the support of the **Word and Work** magazine.

COMING IN 1983: **It Happened in Hamburg**, a true account of the troubles and triumphs of Ernest Dapozzo in a forced-labor camp near Hamburg, Germany, during the last two years of World War II. Here is a brief episode:

I thought of turning back, but then I saw some people watching me. Pushing the door open, I went down the two or three steps leading into the bakery. The smell of fresh bread reminded me of the last time I had enjoyed hot bread just out of the oven. I stepped into the dimly lit room with a decisive "Good morning!"

The baker stopped waiting on his customer, looked me over carefully, and then answered, "Can't you read? The proper greeting is written on the door."

After a moment's reflection, I gave him my reply, "I'm sorry, but I can't use your greeting. Hail Jesus!"

* * * * *

And what happened next? Don't miss a single issue. We are considering the possibility of making this into a book (about 90 pages). Keep it in mind, and we will tell you more later.