

# THE WORD AND WORK

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

Published monthly except December by  
THE WORD AND WORK, 2518 Portland Avenue, Louisville, Ky. 40212  
Second Class Postage Paid at Louisville, Kentucky  
Subscription rate: \$3.00 per year  
In Bundles of 10 or more to one address, \$2.50

Vol LXXII

MARCH, 1978

No. 3

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## *God's Family*

W. R. H.

### **THINK ON THESE THINGS**

In the fourth chapter of Paul's "Joy" epistle to the Philippians, at verse 8, he writes: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." If we take a moment to consider that the church at Philippi rated the most joyous of all Paul's writings, then this admonition in 4:8 becomes even more challenging. To think noble thoughts is not given as a guide to the seeker of salvation, but as a finishing course for the full-grown or nearly-grown child of God. So, "if thou . . . art a teacher of babes . . . thou that teachest others, teachest thou not thyself?" (Rom. 2:17-21).

A literature teacher assigned the students to write a brief poem, and got a pretty fair response from them. Again, term papers were assigned, and many notable ones were prepared. Science students were invited to participate in a science fair, and much worthwhile research and presentation resulted. But, without the assignments and the strong leadership of dedicated teachers, these accomplishments would never have been attempted. So it goes with human nature. We have more potential than we will ever discover, and more ability than we will ever be willing to use.

Of all the "parts" of the human being, the mind is the most wonderful, the most useful, the most powerful, and the most versatile. Physiologists say that we use but a small portion of our brain-power, the development of thought processes and reasoning abilities. Just as in music, the scale, tempo, metre, timbre, harmony, and counter-part present an unlimited field for variety of composition; so in meditation, with the vast amount of knowledge to mull over, there is no end to what can be conceived in the mind, given time and the proper guidance.

Now it is to these two prerequisites that we turn our attention:

Time and Proper Guidance. Herein is the thrust of Philippians 4:8.

Time, called by many the priceless commodity, is actually being robbed from us all. One of the most common ways is by our addiction to leisure. When our day's work is over (and that is not too early, in many cases), we feel that the rest of the time is ours to enjoy. Sports, music, entertainment, exercise, and reading are some common avenues. Who can say that they are not needed? But in some cases they tend to monopolize, and it is a pleasant monopoly, so we give up our time.

Television is one of the chief offenders here. If all you want is keep up with the news, you may find yourself spending an hour from six to seven, or a precious half-hour at eleven. Just a few minutes of worthwhile (?) news is mixed with weather, sports, and commercials until the time becomes tedious. Moreover, much of what is news, is not good food for meditation, in any spiritual sense. Many Christians would be (or should be) astounded if they calculated the amount of man-hours that are given to the tube. This thief of time has become the greatest predator upon culture that our world has experienced since the advent of the dark ages.

Now, if we were able to free-up some of our time, it would do us no good unless we properly used it. An idle mind has been dubbed the Devil's workshop. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he; so we need to guard our hearts and our thoughts. For this reason Paul gave the eight-point outline of meditation to the Philippians. In closing, let us define its terms.

*True.* Faithful, certain, fact, exact, legitimate, authentic.

*Honorable.* High rank, having a sense of right, bringing honor to, respect.

*Just.* Right or fair, upright, deserved, proper, correct.

*Pure.* Clear, unmixed with taints, guiltless, blameless, virgin, undefiled.

*Lovely.* Friendly, amicable, grateful, acceptable.

*Good Report.* Of good omen, commendable, laudable, reputable.

*Virtue.* Goodness, good quality, a gracious act, uprightness.

*Praise.* Applause, honor paid, ground or reason for praise or commendation.

If we are willing to apply this admonition as we mature in Christ, there will be songs, poems, writings, sermons and wise counsel as the fruitage. Our thinking can be cultivated and enjoyable beyond our fondest dreams. We cannot enjoy the full and abundant life that God has prepared for His saints, if we are unwilling to give Him our best.

"If then ye were raised together with Christ, set your minds on things that are above." Have we done so?

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## Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

The Lord Jesus was not Chief Minister of the ministers of the New Testament churches. He was Chief Shepherd of the pastors of the New Testament churches. Why not use New Testament terms in furtherance of unity?

I am not sure that I understand exactly what this querist has in mind. Of course it is very right to use N.T. terms, not only in furtherance of unity but also because of the help it gives in understanding N.T. truths. *We must use N.T. terms as the N.T. uses them, however.* The term "kingdom" is very scriptural, but I find a lot of people using the term in unscriptural ways. Again, some considerable confusion has come to God's people in the use of "sabbath." This is a N.T. (as well as O.T.) term referring to the seventh day of the week, a strict observance of which was required by the law of Moses. But Christian worship is on the first day of the week which is never called the sabbath in the N.T. Yet many use this designation to speak of Sunday. It is a good scriptural term, but it leads to confusion and sometimes to a mistaken binding of O.T. law on people of the new covenant when it is used in a way the scriptures do not use it.

We have dealt with "pastors" in some recent questions, and we do not want to ride the subject to death. Perhaps it is not out of order to make one further attempt to clarify, however. I suppose that the querist is suggesting that it would be better and in the interest of unity if preachers were called pastors instead of ministers. Quite generally among many of the denominational churches this is the case. I believe there is a very valid reason for maintaining a distinction, however. It may be that all N.T. pastors were also preachers, at least on occasion; they were to be "apt to teach" (1 Tim. 3:2). But it certainly does not appear that all N.T. preachers had the qualifications for being pastors. One of the reasons for the misuse of the term pastor today is the fact that too few people realize that in N.T. usage the same men are also called bishops (overseers) and elders (older men, or presbyters). (See Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4.) A pastor is a shepherd, and the men in the N.T. churches who especially had the work of shepherding committed to them were the elders (or bishops). The qualifications for these men are given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. It is

evident that such men had to be married, have families, children old enough to be believers, etc. They had to be men of some age and experience, therefore. Timothy was a preacher (also called a minister, 1 Tim. 4:6), but there is no indication that when Paul's letters were addressed to him this young man possessed all the qualifications for being a pastor.

One could get amused, if it were a less serious matter, when a couple of young men who have barely begun to shave come to the door as representatives of a certain religious group and introduce themselves as "Elder John Doe and Elder Jones." It occurs to me that if these fellows do not understand the meaning of "elder" any better than that, they must not have much else to offer. But there is something that is more common which never seems to raise an eyebrow for a lot of people. A fine young man graduates from religious training and goes out into a "pastorate." He may not even be married, or he may have a family of young babies, but he becomes "the pastor" of the church. Now that young man may be an excellent preacher, but he cannot possibly be qualified as a pastor in the N.T. sense, for several reasons.

"So what?" someone says. "Maybe the term is wrong but it is widely used and 'a rose by any other name smells just as sweet.'" The wrong term, however, tends to mislead both people and preacher as to what responsibilities should be allowed to the young man or what should be thrust upon him. I am not interested in splitting hairs or trying to make the misuse of terms a sin that sends men to hell, but the more I study the word of God the more I realize the importance of properly defining and using words as the scripture uses them if we are to arrive at scriptural conclusions. It is not enough to use a scriptural name for something unless we use it to speak of what the scripture does.

Christ is indeed spoken of as the Chief Shepherd of the shepherds (or pastors) of the N.T. churches, but those shepherds were men who met certain qualifications and who had the oversight of the church; they cannot be strictly identified as preachers. Now while it is true that there is no reference where in so many words Christ is called the Chief Minister—or for that matter, the Chief Deacon, or the Chief Teacher—this does not constitute a denial of His place as such. He is Head over the whole church and all the members thereof, so He is the Head over any office or position man may occupy in the church. It would appear that He singles out the elders for the purpose of reminding them of their great responsibilities.

There is no contention from me that "minister" is some official designation for all those who preach. But as a word descriptive of the work I can find no serious fault with it in speaking of one who is a servant of the gospel and of the church as well as a serv-

ant of Christ. A minister is one who ministers or serves, and the term is general enough to include those who are shepherds as well as those who are not yet able to meet the qualifications.

Now, lest someone contend that nearly all "located" preachers do pastoral work, whether we call them pastors or not, a brief consideration of this may be needful. It is true in many congregations, even those fully organized with elders, this responsibility often is largely turned over to a preacher, who for all practical purposes is "the pastor." He may be quite young, inexperienced, and still more of a sheep than a shepherd. But this very situation points up one of the reasons for a careful use of terms; such men *have no right* to delegate their responsibilities to one who lacks the qualifications for the work to be done. In congregations not organized with elders there is usually a functioning by certain men of the congregation in some of the duties of elders. They may lack in some important qualities, but in the absence of better leadership they serve in some ways. Practical considerations may almost demand this. But shall we say that because these are doing some of the work of elders they should therefore be officially recognized as "elders," forgetting the qualifications? If so, then the scriptural qualifications will soon mean nothing. Moreover, these men need to understand that they are not elders, and the congregation needs to understand that, so that there may be progress on the part of both to a more ideal arrangement. A young preacher may often find himself in a situation where practical wisdom decrees that he do some shepherding. But if he has not been designated "the pastor" and does not think of himself in that term, he may retain a more balanced outlook on his fitness for such work and others in the congregation may have a better concept of their own obligations.

How could Jesus have been in the grave "three days and three nights" if He was crucified on Friday and arose on Sunday?

It is tradition which identifies Friday as the day of His crucifixion, not the scriptures. However, attempts to set the limits of the time period otherwise seem to raise as many problems as they solve. I have never seen a satisfactory explanation of the "three days and three nights" if that is intended to mean that a full 72 hours had to pass. Every language has its idioms, and different peoples have their own manner of expression. It would appear that something of this sort is involved here.

It is worthwhile to notice that whatever the expression means, it presented no problem to even the enemies of Jesus in N.T. times. We can be sure that if the time period was not absolutely as foretold, the enemies of Jesus would have made the most of any inconsistency or shortcoming. This was not a point of contention, however, so we may be sure that the problem is in our understanding, not in the expressions themselves as the people of that day understood them.

Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, in their *Commentary*, give the following explanation of Matt. 12:40: "The period during which He was to lie in the grave is here expressed in round numbers, according to the Jewish way of speaking, which was to regard any part of a day, however small, included within a period of days, as a full day. (See 1 Sam. 30:12, 13; Esther 4:16; 5:1; Matt. 27:63, 64, etc.)" If we examine all the passages which in any way mention the time element, we will probably see that this certainly seems to have been the case. In Luke 24:21, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, say: "Yea and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things came to pass." We can identify the third day of their expression as being the Sunday afternoon of the resurrection day.

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## THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

### Do You Pray As You Ought?

The Apostle Paul was in every way an amazing man. Just think what he was before he met the Lord and what he became, cooperating in his remaking by the Holy Spirit. Surely all will agree that no other man since Paul has been used of the Lord to do so much. The printing press, the radio, the television and the many other modern inventions have allowed evangelists to speak to many times the number Paul did, but not one of them has been able to "turn the world upside down" (Acts 17:6) as Paul and his fellow-workers did. And he did it often while working as a tent-maker to support himself and others.

In Romans 1:8 Paul tells of one of the things that occupied his mind continually: "For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you, always in my prayer. . ." Every time I read this verse I stop and condemn myself for taking so little time to pray. As I read it I think of the other places in the epistles where Paul lists others for whom he prayed unceasingly: the Corinthians (1:4), the Ephesians (1:16), the Philippians (1:3,4); the Colossians (1:3); the Thessa-

Ionians (1 Thes. 1:2); Timothy (2 Tim. 1:3), and Philemon (verse 4). How great this list would be if we were able to read all of Paul's letters to all the churches he established, is easy to imagine. But please tell me, if you worked his hours and suffered his hardships, would you be thanking God that much and interceding for that many people continually? Surely Paul had earned the right to urge his converts to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:13), or to "continue stedfastly in prayer, watching therein with thanksgiving" (Col. 4:2), or to give thanks "always for all things" (Eph. 4:20) or "in everything give thanks" (1 Thess. 5: 18).

Most Christians, forgetting all this and forgetting the constancy with which the Lord Himself prayed and the length of His special prayer periods (sometimes all night), are inclined to feel that we live in a more complicated world than Paul and excuse ourselves by saying, "I don't have the time to pray like that." The actual truth of the matter, of course, is that most Christians have surrendered their prayer time to idle thoughts, to listening to the radio, to reading the newspaper, to watching television, to keeping up with the standard of living and to many other things that cannot bring forth the kind of fruit that prayer can bring. In our lives too often Christ does not have the pre-eminence that the Heavenly Father intended He should have (Col. 1:18). What a shame! What a waste! How many who could have matched fruit with Paul have nothing to show.

In case you feel I have overstated the importance of prayer, maybe a look at Samuel's words in I Samuel 12:23 might be of help: "Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Jehovah in ceasing to pray for you." Samuel considered it a sin against God to cease to pray for God's chosen people. We should be praying for God's people everywhere, for the witness of the Word to others, for "kings and all that are in high places," and for the Lord's guidance for ourselves that we may be the witnesses that He has chosen us to be.

Books can and have been written on this subject and many obvious passages I have chosen not to repeat here, but maybe I should close by quoting some authority unknown by name to me: "You can do more for the Lord after you have prayed, but you can do nothing until you have prayed." May the Lord guide us to pray and to work.

**"I HAVE BEEN CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST" (Gal.2:20)**

The Lord Jesus Christ acted in what He did as a great public representative person, and His dying upon the cross was the virtual dying of all His people. Then all His saints rendered unto justice what was due, and made an expiation to divine vengeance for all their sins. The apostle of the Gentiles delighted to think that as one of Christ's chosen people, he died upon the cross in Christ. He did more than believe this doctrinally, he accepted it confidently, resting his hope upon it. He believed that by virtue of Christ's death, he had satisfied divine justice, and found reconciliation with God. Beloved,

what a blessed thing it is when the soul can, as it were, stretch itself upon the cross of Christ, and feel, "I am dead; the law has slain me, and I am therefore free from its power, because in my Surety I have borne the curse, and in the person of my Substitute the whole that the law could do, by way of condemnation, has been executed upon me, for I am crucified with Christ."

But Paul meant even more than this. He not only believed in Christ's death, and trusted in it, but he actually felt its power in himself in causing the crucifixion of his old corrupt nature. When he saw the pleasures of sin, he said, "I cannot enjoy these: I am dead to them." Such is the experience of every true Christian. Having received Christ, he is to this world as one who is utterly dead. Yet, while conscious of death to the world, he can, at the same time, exclaim with the apostle, "Nevertheless I live." He is fully alive unto God. The Christian's life is a matchless riddle. No worldling can comprehend it; even the believer himself cannot understand it. Dead, yet alive! crucified with Christ, and yet at the same time risen with Christ in newness of life! Union with the suffering, bleeding Savior, and death to the world and sin, are soul-cheering things. Oh for more enjoyment of them!

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## *Viewing the News*

Jack Blaes

**THIS YEAR'S PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA** "served as a challenge to the world's 600 million Muslims to unite—in law and custom, as well as in religious belief—behind a resurgent Islamic fundamentalism with a conservative, anti-communist thrust." *Newsweek*, Dec. 5.

The *Newsweek* article did not mention that Moslem law requires the execution of any one who deserts the Moslem faith for Christianity. While this has not been carried out in some countries in recent years, it is still part of the Sharia. This resurgence bodes ill toward Christ's missionaries in Moslem countries if the followers of Islam take it seriously.

**A RECENT SUPREME COURT DECISION** (6 to 3). The court declined to review a lower court ruling that required the University of Missouri to recognize Gay Lib, a student homosexual group, as an official campus organization. The University insisted that recognition of the group would constitute implied approval . . . of the abnormal homosexual life style as a normal way of life and would be so understood by many students and other members of the public.

The court also holds that a Florida Christian school was wrong in refusing admittance to two black students on the grounds that "Biblical directives" forbade mingling of the races and that

any interference by the courts would violate the constitutional freedom of religion.

Evidently the court doesn't believe in a person's right to hold and practice a wrong religious belief. And, of course, you know who decides if the religious belief is wrong.

JESUS TO THE COMMUNIST WORLD, INC. reports a letter from an 81-year-old Hungarian lady whose three sons were killed by the communists. She wrote that the day she received the tragic news of the loss of her sons was not as sad as the day she read about Billy Graham's praise of the Hungarian Christian's freedom of worship, and his assurance that the church can coexist with the communist regime. In previous speeches he had called the communists "Lucifer's army." Responding to his words, communists in the East forsook the reigning party and went to prison. Others resisted communist tyranny, as these three young men did, and paid with their lives. "What pain for Jesus," this Christian mother sobs, "to hear Billy Graham now deny the message from God which he previously delivered. Jesus cries again. His little children hear the cry and share His passion."

RICHARD WURMBRAND, EDITOR OF THE PAPER, NOTES THAT THE COMMUNISTS gave Graham a limited number of opportunities to preach to very small crowds. It was a cheap price they paid for the world-wide propaganda he will henceforth spread in their favor, confirming their lie that they grant religious liberty.

AFTER ALL, FAIR IS FAIR. Or maybe all's fair in love and war. Recently, in Washington, the Right To Life organization had a march attended by more than 35,000 people. (Estimates ranged from 20,000 to 70,000 in local news vehicles). At the same time, a small group of pro-abortion folks met in a hotel, about two dozen. Guess what? The 24-pro-abortion folks received 30 times the coverage that the 35,000 anti-abortion folk did. It is absolutely amazing! Lester Roloff said something like this: the news

media is like a flock of buzzards—they never land unless they smell something rotten!

A REPORT IN COMMERCE AMERICA, an official publication of the U.S. Department of Commerce, says government economic analysts in the U.S. attributed the remarkable achievement in the Republic of China on Taiwan to a conservative policy in fiscal and monetary matters. In a global survey of U.S. export opportunities in 1978, the paper notes that "despite two very destructive typhoons in 1977, the Gross National Product in the Republic of China still achieved a growth rate of eight percent. The industrial production index more than doubled in 1977 to 203.1, compared with the base number of 100 for 1972." And the rate of inflation in the Republic of China is currently below 5 percent, one of the lowest in the world. Per capita income, "buttressed by virtually full employment, now exceeds U.S. \$1,100 and is one of the highest in the Far East."

If it does happen, it will just be an accident, but I hope that some one high up in the Administration in Washington sees and reads that Government report. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we would return to the free enterprise system?

In times like these, we need a Savior. Pray for our Nation. May God give us better leaders than we deserve, for we certainly need them.

THIS IS A STEP FORWARD? The defense Department has asked Congress to end the ban on women in combat, raising the prospect of women volunteers ultimately flying fighter planes serving in infantry units and working aboard destroyers and aircraft carriers. . . . "This is the first step forward," said Antonia Handler Chayes, and assistant secretary of the Air Force. . . . "The real step lies with Congress." Perhaps you should write your Congressman informing him of your ideas on the subject, and of how you would like for him to vote on the issue. And it isn't a phoney issue, it is really in the works.

A part of Brigadier General Andrew J. Gatsis, U.S. Army (Ret.) testimony before North Carolina's state legislators: "Do you wish to take the risk of placing any of our women in this hellish environment? Do you desire to have them subjected to the stench of bloated and ripened bodies left in the sun several days, where fumigation is required by aircraft to minimize nausea? Do you want your daughter out on recovery patrols to shovel up decomposed human carnage into rubber sacks for identification?"

THE PANAMA CANAL DEBATE. Senator Jesse Helms (R. N.C.) submitted an amendment to the treaties that would have continued U.S. control over a Navy electronic monitoring station in the Canal Zone after the waterway is turned over to Panama. The senate rejected it (58 to 36). According to Helms, the facility on Galleta Island "is irreplaceable in its mission and could not be relocated in another country." In his opposition to the amendment, Senator John Culver (D-Iowa) shouted at the amendment's author, "You would think that World War III was teetering on the brink. Hogwash!" The Senators evidently take their responsibility to keep citizens in safety very lightly as they voted 59 to 34 not to block the wartime use of the canal to enemies of the United States. Why don't you inquire how your senator voted on that one? In more sane times this whole affair would be called just what it is: Treason. They have even voted to table a proposal to eliminate a provision from the treaties which allows ships of all nations to transit the canal free of search or surveillance even in time of war.

Pres. James Carter greeted the 85 year-old Red Dictator of Yugoslavia with lavish praise. A truly remarkable leader, and an inspiration to the people of his own country. Who exemplifies the eagerness for freedom, independence, and liberty in Eastern Europe and throughout the world" Later on the White House lawn, he said the communist "is a man who has understood for a long time our own nation's commitment to detente and the true significance of this misunder-

stood word." Our fearless leader let it be known that he will "take firm measures to prevent and to prosecute" anti-Tito activities and groups originating in the United States. And I'm sure he meant it. He has a fondness for Reds. He is just dying to give one our canal.

KINGSBURY SMITH, NATIONAL EDITOR for the Hearst Newspapers, says that the two black terrorist leaders that U.S. Ambassador Andrew Young is trying to include in a new Rhodesian government "have a record of hideous atrocities against both blacks and whites in Rhodesia." An exhaustive investigation by author Robin Moore reveals that the two terrorists, Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe are backed by the Soviet Union with weapons and instructors, and have been carrying out terrorists raids into Rhodesia from neighboring countries, and have been vying with each other "in committing horrifying acts of violence in Rhodesia," particularly against village chiefs and priests and nuns. Mr. Carter calls the duo, "the freedom force leaders outside of Rhodesia." But you can be sure that if James and Andrew have their way, they will not be on the outside much longer.

IN TENNESSEE ACCORDING TO A Report from the Richmond News Leader, "girl basketball teams play on a half court with six-member teams. It turns out that that is a no-no. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare says that unless girl basketball teams start playing by boy basketball rules, IIEW will cut off federal school funds. This is called playing the game by IIEW's rules."

AND HERE'S WHERE IT GETS IT: Title IX of the Education Amendments of the 1972 states that no person "shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." This is not just a joke, it is what always happens when a community depends on government for its finances. This would be reversed if the people made the government understand that it is dependent upon them, and not the other way

# Four Aspects of the Eldership

by Larry Miles

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus told His disciples the day would come when the church of Christ would be established. We know also that on the day of Pentecost, the church of Christ became a reality. We know that the United States of America has a written constitution to know what certain laws are and how to apply them to the "so-called" at times good of the country. So, also, the church of the Lord has a written constitution, given by the Lord Jesus Christ, as He revealed His will through the inspired writers. The Lord has told us how to conduct our Christian lives and He also has told us how to conduct our affairs concerning the local assembly. Is there a scriptural pattern for the carrying out of the local church affairs? Yes, there is! One of the great sayings of the Restoration Movement of the Nineteenth Century was "Call Bible Things By Bible Names." Or "Speak Where The Scriptures Speak and Keep Silent Where They Are Silent." The concept of the Eldership is in keeping with the former phrase and that the Bible is most certainly not silent on this key concept is in keeping with the latter. Concerning the importance of the scriptures concerning all things, we would like to quote an excerpt from one of the most important documents having to do with the Restoration Movement of the last Century. In 1804 Barton W. Stone, in *The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery*, wrote these words: "We will, that the people henceforth take the Bible as the only sure guide to heaven; as many are offended with other books, which stand in competition with it, may cast them into the fire if they choose; for it is better to enter into life having one book, than having many to be cast into hell." By a study of the writings of the pioneers we see a great reverence for the word of God.

If we are to be true to the N.T., we ought to be doing all we can to restore the ancient order of things concerning the New Testament church. We ought to be teaching the truth concerning the eldership. In this paper, we are going to strive to do this. We want to write about four aspects of the eldership. They are as follows:

- I. THE ELDERSHIP: ITS ESTABLISHMENT IS DIVINE!
- II. THE ELDERSHIP: ITS PERPETUITY
- III. THE ELDERSHIP: ITS QUALIFICATIONS
- IV. THE ELDERSHIP: ITS DUTIES

## THE ELDERSHIP: ITS ESTABLISHMENT IS DIVINE

Was the Eldership sanctioned by the Word? If it is not then we ought not have anything to do with it. If it was, then we ought to be willing to teach and practice all that is said on it. There have been many false systems of Church Government instituted by the denominational world. We want to cite three here: (1) The Episcopal Form:

In this system, you have 3 levels of clergymen, deacons, priests, and bishops. The authority of each is greater and each is subject to the higher one. Examples of this system are the Roman Catholic, the Greek Orthodox Church, and the Anglican Church. (2) The Presbyterian Form: Although they do have elders, they have made a distinction between the teaching elder, who is always the ordained Pastor, and the ruling elder, who is always a layman. An example of this system is the Presbyterian Church. (3) Congregational Form: All matters are decided by a vote of the congregation. Example: The Baptist Church.

Are any of these true to the Word of God? In the view of the writer none is. According to the New Testament, rule of the churches falls in the authority of the eldership. We ask that you consider the following verses: I Thes. 5:12-13; I Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:7; and Heb. 13:17. Are Elders to be dictators? No.

### ELDERSHIP: ITS PERPETUITY

We have established the fact that the eldership was and is sanctioned by the teaching of the Word of God. The Bible says that there were "Elders in every place". A claim is made that the existence of the eldership did not go beyond the first century; that, of course, is false teaching.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERSHIP

We have already established that the eldership is in the plan of God and that also it is to be practiced today. We now want to talk about the qualifications. If there is an office, then there must be qualifications and duties. We will be discussing duties in the next point, so we want to now consider some thoughts on the qualifications of elders. The qualifications for elders are listed in I Tim. 3, and in Titus 1. Bro. Tom Thurman in his class in the Church, gave us this list on how to parallel the lists of Timothy and Titus:

#### Timothy 3:1-7

Without Reproach  
 The husband of one wife  
 Temperate  
 Sober-minded  
 Orderly  
 Given to Hospitality  
 Apt to teach  
 No Brawler  
 No Striker  
 Gentle  
 Not Contentious  
 No lover of money  
 One who rules well own house  
 Not a Novice  
 Good testimony from without

#### Titus 1:5-9

Blameless  
 The husband of one wife  
 Self-controlled  
 Sober-minded  
 Given to Hospitality  
 No Brawler  
 No Striker  
 Not self-willed  
 Not greedy of filthy lucre  
 Having children that believe  
 Not acused of riot or unruly  
 Not soon angry  
 Lover of Good  
 Holy  
 Holding to the faithful word.

According to Boles, there is one important fact to consider concerning these qualifications, "There are few qualifications listed for the elders which do not belong to all Christians." Bro. J. W. McGar-

vey, in his book, *The Eldership*, divides the qualifications into five areas. "Experience, Reputation, Domestic Relations, Character, and Habits." Concerning the importance of the work and responsibility of elders we want again to quote from the book by Boles, *The Eldership of the churches of Christ*. On p. 24, Bro. Boles wrote these words, "When we look at the work of elders and the responsibility that rests upon them we are not surprised at the high standard that the Holy Spirit has given for elders."

## DUTIES OF ELDERS

Bro. J. W. McGarvey said in his book on *the Eldership*, "The title Shepherd is still more significant than either of the other two." The other two were elder and bishop. He says that the term shepherd shows what the duties are. In Psalm 23, David wrote these words that just may tell us what the ideal elder must do. "The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want, He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters, He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his names' sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: For thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me . . ." (KJV)

Elders are to be sound in the faith. They are to be, according to I Peter 5:3, examples to their flock. They are also to take heed to the spiritual condition of the church. The eldership is to take the oversight of the congregation in spiritual areas. Concerning the duties of the elders, Bro. Boles said: "Elders are to rule, teach, and exercise discipline in the church. They are to teach the word of God, or feed the flock with the sincere milk of the word. They must not only preserve the word of God intact, but they must resist the introductions of inovations. The congregation is to honor them as fathers, obey them as God's shepherds, receive not an accusation against them except at the mouth of two or more witnesses, count them worthy of double honor, and imitate their faith."

We hope that we have considered and prepared the subject well. It is my prayer that these writings can be of some use for the advancing of the cause to promote New Testament Christianity in our day and bring about the untiy for which our Saviour prayed in John 17.

# PROPHECY

Edited by Dr. Horace E. Wood

## "Blessed Be Egypt"

Dr. Daniel Fuchs

Dearly Beloved Friends: "Blessed be Egypt, my people . . ." This prophecy found in Isaiah 19:25 is one of the most startling promises in the Bible. "Blessed be Egypt?" From the birth of the nation of Israel until today there has never been a nation that persisted so long and so violently in persecuting the Jews.

It is true that Germany in modern times sought to destroy the nation, but the modern anti-Semitism of Hitler is short-lived in comparison to the 3,500 years from Pharaoh to Sadat. Besides, Hitler admitted that he was just inserting a page into history that Pharaoh began to write.

How could God Who promised to Abram, "I will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curseth thee" ever bless Egypt at all? The Lord not only extended His blessing to Egypt, but called them "my people." This seems to be the most incredible prophecy in the Scriptures.

It is even more difficult to think that in our days we might be seeing the groundwork laid for the fulfillment of this prophecy. Six months ago one would matriculate into an asylum by mentioning a remote possibility that Sadat would ever visit Jerusalem while a single Jew still lived. But look at what has happened recently. President Anwar Sadat and Prime Minister Menahem Begin have spoken with each other, and at last the prospect of face-to-face negotiations between Israel and Egypt is a possibility. It seems that Isaiah 19 is highly significant.

At this point it is very important that I make my position clear. I am not stating that Sadat's visit to Jerusalem is the beginning of the fulfillment of Isaiah 19. However, it *may be* the initial act in this drama. But with what goes on in Cairo and Moscow and Damascus behind closed doors, we cannot be absolutely certain that THIS is it. One thing we are sure of, the Scriptures clearly teach that Israel and Egypt will one day be allies. Not only that, but Egypt will worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!

In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of hosts; . . . In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border of it to the Lord. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt, for they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a savior, and a great one, and he shall deliver them. And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord

in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it. And the Lord shall smite Egypt; he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be entreated by them, and shall heal them. In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land, Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt, my people, and Assyria, the work of my hands, and Israel, mine inheritance" (Isaiah 19:18-25).

What an amazing prophecy! I must repeat my question. How could God Who promised to Abram, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" ever bless Egypt at all?

The answer is in the same verse of the Abrahamic Covenant. God promised "I will bless them that bless thee." Three times Egypt was a blessing to the people of God. We may have forgotten these three acts of blessing but God remembers!

We have castigated all of the Pharaohs, because of the Pharaoh "who knew not Joseph" (Ex. 1:8). However, when Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave there was a Pharaoh that made him a king. Joseph was God's instrument in preserving Israel's family and Pharaoh helped! It was in Egypt that the family of God grew and was welded into a nation.

Why was it necessary for God to bring the chosen family into the land of Egypt? Secular history tells us of the disgusting conditions of the so-called "Canaanitish" civilization. As the family of Israel multiplied it would have been virtually impossible to keep out the corrupting influence of the Canaanites. The family would be assimilated. They needed more favorable circumstances so they could grow into a nation, and Egypt provided these circumstances. The Egyptian civilization was the highest of its day. No finer home could be found than the land of Goshen near the Nile River. Inter-marriage was impossible because of the Egyptian regulations concerning foreigners. God brought Joseph to this land. Joseph became so famous that Pharaoh was delighted to welcome Jacob and his children and to give them the best of the land.

When Jacob and his family went down into Egypt they numbered only seventy people. They were too few to attempt to take possession of the Promised Land. Time and opportunity must be provided for numerical growth. Living happily in a fruitful land for several hundred years, they flourished. The original seventy grew into a nation of at least two million people. During this time the people were probably instructed in Egyptian schools, learned new trades, and were instructed in self-government. This schooling was important preparation for their later life in the wilderness and in Canaan.

Twelve hundred years later two of Alexander the Great's generals, Seleucus and Ptolemy fought for Israel and finally Ptolemy won and once more Israel was ruled by Egypt. For a little more than a century

Israel continued under the mild rule of the Ptolemies. The parts of the land inhabited by the Jews were governed by the high priests, aided by a council of the elders.

One result of the union between Egypt and Israel was that the Jews became numerous, wealthy and influential in Alexandria, the chief seaport of the Mediterranean. As Greek was the language of commerce and civilization, it soon became the language of Jews everywhere, except in Israel where a dialect arose blending the old Hebrew with Chaldee and Syriac words. The lessons were still read in the synagogue from the ancient Hebrew text, but the people couldn't understand it. It had to be interpreted.

In Egypt among the Jews of the Dispersion, a demand grew for the sacred writings in the Greek language. By degrees and through many scholars, the books were translated. The names of the translators have not been preserved, but a tradition that there were seventy men gave to the translation the name "Septuagint" from the Latin *septuaginta* "seventy." The version was made between 285 and 245 B.C. It was widely welcomed by the Jews of the Dispersion; and now, because it was in Greek, it was studied by the Greeks themselves.

It was in Egypt that the Hebrew Scriptures were made available for the entire world. The most important historical event of the intertestament period was not the wars of Alexander's generals, not the rise of Rome, but the translation of God's Word so that all could read and understand. This was accomplished in Egypt. What a blessing this was to the Jews and to the world! God said, "I will bless them that bless thee."

Two and a half centuries later Israel was ruled by an Edomite usurper, Herod. Late in his reign a Child was born in Bethlehem of Judea.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod, the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod, the king, had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. (Mt. 2:1-3)

Herod wanted to slay the Child, but an angel warned Joseph.

Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt. (Mt.2:13-15)

This was the third time that God used Egypt for His purpose. Perhaps Sadat's visit is the fourth.

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AN ATHEIST is a man who has no invisible means of support.

# **A Testimony of God's Grace – Today**

Linda Hobbs

This is a story of Thanksgiving. Thanks to our wonderful prayer-answering Lord and to our Christian friends throughout our churches, for prayers offered for our son Stephen. Stephen is autistic. It's a form of brain damage. Autism means withdrawal and lack of affection but it's main characteristic is lack of speech. Having a retarded child would have been hard to care for, but, a child with no speech is frustrating. You never know what his needs are and have to guess hit and miss at his health and happiness.

To give you some background, I grew up in the Highview Church and Wayne in the Ormsby Church. We attended S.C.C. We thought of ourselves as Christians and worked to maintain the ideals of the Lord. We met, dated, fell in love like most young people. We always kept Christ in our relationship. Before our marriage we discussed having a family. We decided our first born son would be named Stephen and we would dedicate him to the Lord. We dedicated our lives to Christ as part of our wedding ceremony. We sought His guidance in our marriage.

Time went by and finally we knew we were to become parents. Can you imagine our joy when we were given a healthy boy? Our world was perfect. The Lord seemed to smile on us. As Stephen grew we began to see he wasn't keeping up with other children his age. We refused to accept it, making excuses. At age 2, Stephen had an ear infection with a high fever. We rushed him to the hospital but it was too late; further damage had been done. He was in a daze for a while but when he didn't snap back, we began to worry. We eventually had him tested, and tested, and tested, and tested. With nine doctors, we had eight opinions. Stephen is still frightened of doctors today. Everyone gave us advice but no one could help. Our world was crushed, our hearts broken. Why, Lord, when we have tried to serve You? Why must Stephen be this way?

Then we started a long ordeal of schooling at age 3. He's been to four different schools, each one more difficult for us, more miles to cover, more heartaches at his failures. He had to have constant supervision and attention. He slept 3 hours out of 24 and had allergies and was hyperactive.

When Stephen was two and a half years old the Lord blessed us with a daughter. I thought Stephen would snap back with a baby to copy but he resented her and ignored her. When Angela was 18 months old, I was in deep depression. I went back to college to get out of the house and away from Stephen. I studied long hours up at night doing my homework while the children slept. I

carried my second daughter while I did my student teaching and when she was 5 weeks old I graduated from Indiana University Southeast. Again I hoped Stephen would profit from listening to a baby talk. He still had no speech. Can you imagine the frustration if you could comprehend but couldn't talk to tell the world you understand? He would take my hand and lead me to what he wanted. All along we prayed for the Lord to make our son normal, our hearts still broken, our burden heavier as the years went by. Our idea of dedicating Stephen to the Lord went out the window. How could the Lord use this poor tormented child?

When Stephen was 5 years old the Lord led us to a doctor who took him off all drugs, which did no good anyway. She put him on a sugar-free diet, a natural diet with no preservatives, colorings, or flavorings. She gave him vitamins instead of drugs. It took 3 years but through the diet his hyperactivity decreased, his health improved and his attention span lengthened. It looked to the outside world like he was improving. Inside Stephen and inside me, frustration was still high. I hate to admit it but I resented him for making my life hard, different from others. Why should I have all these problems? Why me? Stephen was 9 years old on December 27, 1977.

At the end of the school year in May 1977, Stephen's teachers told us he had reached his peak. They felt he was operating on a 2 year mental age and wasn't going to improve. They said they would allow him to stay at their school until he was 12 but they suggested strongly that we start looking for residential homes for Stephen. Most everyone has a 3 year waiting period for a vacancy so they said to get on a list now.

This was the final blow! We had come this far, now this. We grieved for days. The burden was just too much to carry. We visited several institutions, which were nightmares. I knew I couldn't sleep knowing Stephen would be in a place like those we visited. The next Sunday morning I went forward and asked for the prayers of the church. I couldn't bear this alone and I prayed for understanding in the Lord's Will in Stephen's life. Our wonderful loving Church at Henryville surrounded us with love. Our burden was their burden. They put up with so much from Stephen over the years during church services, now they wrapped us in their healing love. I walked back and stood beside Stephen and as I looked down at him the most wonderful thing happened. I didn't resent him anymore. My heart filled with love, love like I felt the day of his birth when they laid him in my arms. I really gave over my burden to the Lord that day. After being a baptised believer for nearly 20 years, I finally realized what it was to be a Christian. The Lord answered my prayer—He said NO—No, Stephen won't be normal but he'll be a blessing to you. He didn't fix Stephen, He fixed my attitude. Stephen sensed it and improved accordingly. He felt the love and over the summer his behavior im-

proved, he slept 8 hours a night, his attention span increased and he was a delight.

In the fall when he returned to school his teachers were amazed at his progress, since he was doing so poorly in May. They asked me what new diet I had him on and could I instruct the other parents so their children could improve. I told them prayer—Prayer was the answer. They laughed, rolled their eyes skyward and walked away. Six weeks later at parents conference time, Stephen's mental age was about 2 and a half years and still improving. Another parent was telling me of a new drug she used to knock out her child at night so she could get some rest. She told me I needed it. The school Director overheard and hit the ceiling.

She told the mother that what I had for my son was better than what she had for her son. The parents began questioning me—what was I doing to make Stephen better. Again I repeated my story of prayer—I got the same reaction as before. The Director stopped the parents and told them she didn't believe it 6 weeks ago either but Stephen's progress had made a believer of her now. It was true, prayer from Christian people was helping Stephen get better.

At last Stephen was used of the Lord. The parents keep tabs on him and watch for his progress. Another great blessing is the gift of communication—through sign language. Stephen now signs for his wants and needs. He signs in short sentences. The whole family learned with him and it comes in handy in church. I see the Lord's leading in Stephen's life. I see why the training through years of heartaches. I wouldn't have appreciated it if I hadn't come so far. Stephen IS a blessing. He is my testimony and the Lord IS using him through me to tell others of the Lord's Love which marvelously upheld me through the rough years and how he answers prayer. It was worth it all—to know the full meaning of Christ's love.

The years ahead will be rough but I have prayer to carry me through. What greater task could I ask, to work with an angel, a true child of the Lord? I know that one fine day in Glory, Stephen will "TALK" all over God's Heaven. We covet your prayers for Stephen.

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## PRAISE

In heaven praise is so important that it constitutes the total occupation of a certain order of beings. (Rev. 4:8)

To be most effective praise must be massive, continuous, a fixed habit, a full-time occupation, a diligently pursued vocation, a total way of life.

*God's love is a much safer subject to think about, and to sing about, than our love for Him.*

# The Stone Cut Out Without Hands

W. J. Johnson

Daniel 2:44-45

“And in the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.”

In Matthew 16:18 Jesus said, “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” (v. 19)

It appears that Jesus makes some distinction between the church and the kingdom of heaven. But just what is the difference is hard to understand. For Peter used the keys of the kingdom to open the door of the church at Pentecost and again at the house of Cornelius to the Gentiles (Acts 10). Also Jesus in using parables to illustrate the kingdom never spoke of the church. Nevertheless, every parable of the kingdom is applicable to the activities of the church in some phase of its activities. But He never said the church is the kingdom, although in Colossians 1:13 Paul speaks of the church and the kingdom in a manner that leads us to believe that the church and the kingdom are one. They are so related that they cannot be separated.

In the great commission which Jesus gave His apostles, He told them to preach the gospel in every nation and to baptize into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (Matthew 28:18-20) and promised “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be condemned (Mark 11:15, 16). In Luke 24:41-45 He gave the fundamental principle of the gospel, “Repentance and remission of sin in my name beginning at Jerusalem”, he gave them instructions to wait at Jerusalem till they were endued with power from on high.

Baptism is a union with Christ in His death. Furthermore in the likeness of His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:3, 4). Consequently baptism was required without any option. For man has no voice in building the church. This fact is verified by Acts 2:47. “And the Lord added to them (the Church) those that were saved.”

Furthermore it is obvious that God intended to keep man from

having part in building the church. For as we read Titus 3:4-7 it is made clear to us that our works do not save us, for it is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. So let us read: "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

In the Great Commission the grace of God appeared to all men offering salvation in the name of Jesus Christ. He is using His authority in this age to save souls, before He takes His authority in the next age to rule the nations with a rod of iron. Note He has authority in the age to come (Ephesians 1:19-21).

In the great commission Gentiles are given an opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour and to enjoy joint relationship with believing Jews. So they become members in the commonwealth of the house of Israel, "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of the twain one new man, so making peace; (Ephesians 2:14-15). But read Ephesians 2:12-3:6.

Let us now read Acts 15:13-17; "Men and brethren, (James is speaking) hearken unto me: Simon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out to them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."

It is reasonable to believe that James understood that Christ Jesus was not on the throne of David in this age (the church age). For he knew that the heavens must receive him "until the times of restoration of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouths of the holy prophets" (see Acts 3:21-23). And besides he knew that the Jews nationally must repent and turn to God that their sins may be forgiven so that seasons of refreshing may come from the Lord and that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for them. (Acts 3:19-21). Read Matthew 21:37-89.

"Christ loved the church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify it having cleansed it by the washing of water and with the word that he might present it unto himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Ephesians 5:25-27. Read.).

The idea that Jesus Christ conveys is that the church is His bride, a member of the royal family (compare 1 Peter 2:9) and will reign and without blemish." (Ephesians 5:25-27. Read.).

Moreover the idea of the church inheriting and reigning with Christ Jesus is conveyed in the following scripture. Romans 8:17; "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. And in Revelation 2:25-28: "But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star."

But in this life our bodies have not been redeemed (Romans 8:23) and made like the glorious body of Christ (Philippians 3:21). Furthermore "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Corinthians 15:50-53). That is we who are alive that are left shall be changed and together caught up to meet him in the air, and so shall we ever be with him. (1 Thessalonians 4:14-16).

But it is necessary that we note a few things about the fourth kingdom as it is recorded in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon.

In Nebuchadnezzar's dream the fourth kingdom was two legs of iron and the feet and toes were iron and clay, which indicates a change in form of government. This will be made clearer as we study. However it is generally accepted that the Caesars were kings in the days represented by the legs of iron. It was in their days that Christ Jesus lived and fulfilled His ministry. He never identified the church as the Kingdom, but in His teachings He used parables to show what the kingdom of heaven was like unto. But it is true to say that the parables illustrated the different phases of the church in its work even unto His coming again.

When Jesus Christ comes in power and glory He will use His great power as King over the nations. He will take unto himself the church as His bride (Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:6-9) and He will give her the right to sit with Him on His throne as He overcame and sat with His Father on His throne. Also He gives her the authority to rule the nations with a rod of iron as a potter's vessel is broken to pieces (Revelation 2:25-27; Psalms 2:7-9). Thus the age of grace ends and the age to come begins.

(to be continued)

## REPRINTS:

### The State of Israel

R. H. Boll — 1948

The new State of Israel is an accomplished fact. The thrilling announcement was swiftly followed by the news of recognition by the United States and some other nations. So after almost 2000 years the Jews take their place again as an autonomous nation in the old "land of Israel"! To be more exact—it is more nearly 2500 years since such a thing has been. From the days of Nebuchadnezzar until the present time—excepting a brief period under the Maccabees—they had never been a free and independent nation. But here they are again! What does it mean? Of course that matter is not altogether settled as yet. There is a life-and-death struggle going on between the Jews and the Arabs, and no one can foretell the immediate outcome of that. Nevertheless, a Jewish state and government has actually been set up; and however we take it, we cannot deny that it is one of the "signs of the times." Questions are being asked. Will this bold stroke succeed? Will the Jews be able to establish a permanent state and government for themselves in Palestine? And, could this be the beginning of their regathering and restoration as foretold by their prophets? What does this present development mean?

#### THE IMPERISHABLE NATION

It is a marvel to begin with that the people of Israel are in existence at all. All the forces that would be calculated to destroy a nation have been brought to bear on this people throughout the past centuries, but they are still here; and though of a most ancient stock, they are yet young and virile and powerful. "The history of Israel," said Ernest Renan, "contradicts all the philosophy of history." The laws that account for the rise and fall of nations do not seem to apply to Israel. Dispossessed, displaced, scattered, persecuted, hated, pillaged and robbed, exiled, hunted and slain, Israel still survives. She has been aptly compared to the burning bush, which, ever burning is never consumed. There is no explanation of this phenomenon, except that which is found in the declaration of God's word. "I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee," said the Lord, "but I will not make a full end of thee. But I will correct thee in measure, and will in no wise leave thee unpunished." (Jer. 30:11.) And again, "Thus saith Jehovah who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars by night . . . if these ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith Jehovah: If the heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith Jehovah." (Jer. 31:35-37.)

## THE PEOPLE AND THE LAND

Now this indestructible people are linked in a peculiar fashion to a certain Land—a country which God gave by promise to their forefathers, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; a land which He had “searched out for them,” a land “flowing with milk and honey,” which is “the glory of all lands”—“a land of hills and valleys . . . which Jehovah thy God careth for: the eyes of Jehovah thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.” (Deut. 11:9-12; Ezek. 20:6.) Roughly speaking this land embraces what today is called Palestine. When the Lord brought the people out of Egypt He gave them possession of the land and they were permitted to dwell in it, *on condition* that they keep His covenant and obey His commandments. But God strictly gave them to understand that the land belonged to Him, and that they were but tenants (“strangers and sojourners”) in it. (Lev. 25:23; 18:24-28). But it was also promised them that in those latter days, when after much bitter experience they shall have returned to the Lord, that He would plant them in their own land, and they should possess it, and be moved no more ever. (II Sam. 7:10; Jer. 30:3; Amos 9:15.)

## ISRAEL'S CLAIM TO THE LAND

With these facts in mind we may be enabled better to evaluate the events of our present days. In the first place it must be evident that regardless of any claim Israel may make, the land of Palestine is not their land. From the first it was peculiarly God's land. He cast out the nations that occupied it before Israel when they had filled up the cup of their iniquity (Gen. 15:16); and when He gave it to Israel for a temporary possession, it was with the warning that if they kept not His charge and His covenant they would in turn be cast out of the land as were the nations that lived before them. And so it came to pass. Israel was disobedient, and violated the covenant of God. So at last came the Assyrians, and afterward Nebuchadnezzar, and carried the nation away into captivity; and though there was a partial restoration afterward, they never again *possessed* the land. Finally, forty years after they crucified their Messiah, the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, and the people were driven and scattered through all the earth, as at this day. It is quite evident that the Jew has no right or claim before God to the “Holy Land.”

## THE PRESENT ATTEMPT

But now by political means and by force of carnal weapons Israel thinks to possess themselves of it; and many speak touchingly of the Jews' struggle to regain their own land.<sup>1</sup> Yet if God still maintains His sovereign rights and jurisdiction concerning that land (which certainly He does) then, obviously, this attempt on part of the Jews to regain possession of the land and to establish themselves in it, is foredoomed to failure. Though temporarily successful, it cannot result in their final restoration. Not by decree of the United Nations

Council, not by the favor of the United States Government nor by the good-will of Russia; not by violence, and desperate warfare, but only by repentance and return to the God of their fathers, and by submission to Jesus their rejected Messiah can Israel ever obtain her ancient inheritance.

#### DEFIANCE AND UNBELIEF

How far they are from such a surrender is plainly manifest. The leaders back of the Zionist Movement, and those who are directing the present struggle are for the most part "modernists" and infidels. God had no place in their thoughts, nor does His will enter into any of their plans and calculations. Quite recently they have declared that they would not tolerate any "theocratic" implications in their new state and government. In other words no insinuation that God is the nation's King shall be countenanced.<sup>2</sup> They will leave Him out, together with all the Old Testament superstitions. Still further would they be from recognizing Jesus as their Messiah and King. However, in the old Book it is written, "Surely, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I be King over you" (Ezek. 20:33). And as for their Messiah—they shall see Him in the day when they are ready to hail and welcome Him, and to say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 23:39).

#### WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

Has then this new development any prophetic significance at all? It surely has. The prophetic scriptures make it clear that, preliminary to their final repentance and restoration, Israel will re-gather to their land in unbelief and in defiance of God. And it is in their land that the fury of the Great Tribulation will be poured out upon them. "Gather yourselves together," says the prophet of God, "yea, gather together, O nation that hath no shame; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of

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#### FOOTNOTE 1.

In a letter just received from Brother S. D. Eckstein, Jewish Missionary in Kansas City, he refers to the Jew's passionate love for that land, as follows:

"The world is electrified by the unparalleled love, devotion and sacrifice Jewry manifest to Eretz Yisrael. O that magic bit of Land! When the Jews unveiled the Warsaw monument for the millions of our brethren who were murdered by the Nazis, they brought sacred soil from the Holy Land and comingled it with the soil on which the monument was built. My brethren can have no peace, until the respond to God's appeal: "This is my Beloved Son, Hear ye Him." Then is a fountain opened to them for sin and uncleanness. Here lies the Divine Remedy for all their ills. If obeyed, they will be delivered and delighted."

#### FOOTNOTE 2.

It is the same story, as of ancient time: they do not want to be God's people in any peculiar sense—they want to be like the nations. But God never gives up what He has begun. The gifts and calling of God are not repented of. (Rom. 11:29). "And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, in that ye say, We will be as the nations, as the families; of the countries . . ." (Ezek. 20:32.)

Jehovah come upon you" (Zeph. 2:1, 2). "And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith Jehovah, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein." This latter is the precious nucleus of the new regenerate Israel. "And I will bring the third part into the fire (for God has chosen them in the furnace of affliction, Isa. 48:10) and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God." (Zech. 13:9.) In Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones, two steps are seen in the revival of the nation—the first, the great stirring when bone is gathered to its bone, and the skeletons are clothed with sinews, flesh, and skin; but as yet no life is in them; the second, when the breath of life enters them, and they stand up, a great living host before Jehovah. (Ezek. 37.) The former appears to be coming to pass now. The people of Israel are going back in unbelief, dead in their trespasses and sins. They go back for trouble—such trouble as never they experienced before and never shall see again; but the nation—a remnant—shall be saved out of it (Jer. 30:7).

#### THE MEANING TO GOD'S PEOPLE TODAY

The setting up of the Jewish State in Palestine is a sign of the times. Jerusalem is not in the hands of Israel as yet, and may not be for some time to come. The scenes of her final siege and distress as foretold in Zech. 14 and Joel 3 are yet to take place. But present day events point to the approaching climax of prophecy. The Lord Jesus Christ told us that "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). Also, in the same discourse, "When these things *begin* to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28). And, "Watch ye at every season, making supplication that ye may prevail to escape all these things (the evils of the great tribulation, vv. 25, 26) and to stand before the Son of man (Luke 21:36). It is time for Christians to lift up their heads and to look for the event which must precede all else—Christ's coming to receive His saints unto Himself. (I Thess. 4:16).

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## Open Letter to Pres. Anwar Sadat

Anwar Sadat

President of Egypt

Dear President Sadat,

Your going to Jerusalem has been acclaimed by the leaders of many nations as having been a very courageous act. Your mere going was not the main thing that demonstrated your courage for you were well guarded and protected by the military powers of Israel.

Your open confession of your belief in, and your dependence upon the Sovereign God made you a target to the proud scoffers of the world. In ignoring their fiery darts you showed great courage. In this, you stand almost alone on the battlements of the world. What other world leader has taken such a brave stand?

It is unpopular to admit your belief in or your dependence upon God or to acknowledge his active influence in the world today. The scoffers say that such one is too realistic and does not meet the issues face on. They claim that God is dead or so far removed from the problems of this world that He might as well be dead.

Your confession referred to above consisted of two things.  
1st: When in Jerusalem you went to a shrine and worshipped God.  
2nd: You publicly stated that "God would give us peace."

Surely God will respect and honor your trust in Him as it is written "Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies."

How can we have respect unto those who deny the existence of God, their maker? It is written "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God" Psa. 14:1. The existence of God is a self evident fact attested to by all creation, as it is written, "The firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech." Psa. 19:1-2.

The question arises, is the creator of the universe the God of the Bible? The Bible makes that claim "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" 11 Pet. 1:21. How can that claim stand in the light of logic? Those holy men, by the power of God were able to see the end from the beginning.

With reference to this, it is written in Isa. 46:9-19. "I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning." The Bible has looked down the stream of time, thousands of years, and has seen and recorded hundreds of prophecies, every one of which has been minutely and accurately fulfilled at its appointed time of fulfillment.

Now President Sadat, we come to a startling prophecy pertaining to your beloved Egypt. It looks very much like your recent negotiations with Israel has set in motion the first stages of the prophetic fulfillment.

"In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people; and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance."

President Sadat, you appear to be a man of destiny, a chosen vessel of God in the fulfillment of this prophecy.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Ray Allen Young

# Missionary Messenger

*"Greater things for God"*

Alvin Hobby

Livingstone, Zambia

January 13, 1978

In this area, it continues to rain and rain. It has been so wet for several days lately that we cannot hoe in our garden. All we can do is to pull up weeds and grass with our hands.

Georgia seems to be making good progress. She is walking with one crutch now; and her left foot and knee are not as sore as they were, with the increased exercise they are getting. Perhaps next month she can be "walking alone".

The church work continues as usual in this area, but sometimes the rains and swollen streams hinder the Bible classes in the villages.

Since the school holidays are nearly finished, Georgia will have a new set of Sunday School teachers in a week or two.

This month and last, I have been reading and correcting Tonga typescripts of the Minor Prophets.

Donald R. Harris

Salisbury, Rhodesia

December 30, 1977

Sister Garrett is back with us again and we are all so happy to see her. The work here is still going very well and one of our boys (George Talman age 15) came to the Lord and was baptized the 27th of November. The Arcadia Church of Christ still exists and is striving to do the Lord's will. Nearly all of the boys in the Home attend the Monday night prayer meeting to meet and pray with the older men. We seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in who is to speak, preside over the Lord's table and any function to be carried out. It is a good time together and we ask all of you to keep praying for all these children and us also to have the love for others as Jesus wants us to.

Addie Brown

Waterfalls, Rhodesia

January 20, 1978

I am sorry I haven't got down to writing before today. I must get this in the mail. The weekend was too full for writing. Yesterday was our day for meeting and Bible study, 11 women were present. We have been challenged by our study of God's will for women. Now to put it into practice! Most of us were challenged to possess a meek and quiet spirit which is so precious in God's sight. Of course, the subject of submission is always challenging in a woman's group.

We continue to have much rain. We hear that the crops, some of them, are rotting in the fields. We washed clothes this morning hoping to get them dry but it is getting quite cloudy again.

Joy Garrett

Salisbury, Rhodesia

February 6, 1978

A new Church of Christ was begun at Patronage Mine not far from Salisbury at the end of 1977. Fifteen have been baptized by the Harare brethren who have been going out there teaching them God's word. In the difficult times we live in here in Rhodesia we thank God for this continued working in the hearts of men.

Several weeks ago we were at Harare. Two young girls were baptized into Christ. Yesterday we were at Mufakose and last night at Arcadia. We cannot get around to all the local churches as there are too many of them, but we thank God for the dedicated, zealous leaders of these congregations who do a good job of shepherding their flocks. May the Lord of the Harvest raise up more laborers unto His Harvest.

Leonard and Mabel Bailey

Bellevue, Rhodesia

February 20, 1978

Mabel arrived back from Canada on January the 23rd, after a long but good flight. It was a very welcome sight to see her step off the plane. She enjoyed so much being with her family over the winter holidays for the first time in 19 years. As our other trips have been during summer, in 1965 and 1973.

She especially enjoyed being able to visit so many places in the 45 days. We appreciate very much the concern and prayers for the Rhodesian people. Mabel even enjoyed the extremes of a good old-fashioned Canadian winter.

We are happy that Allen has been able to enroll in Western Christian College. He seems to be enjoying the cold weather and being with his cousins. We pray that we have done the wise thing for his welfare.

David Brown

Salisbury, Rhodesia

March 7, 1978

A settlement has just been signed by the Rhodesian Government, and Black Nationalist leaders. We are waiting to see what International acceptance this will have.

I am in my third year leading a Bible Class at the Central Hospital. We meet for study in a house across the street from the Hospital, and most of those who attend are connected in some way with the Hospital. Our past studies have included, Daniel, Revelation, and The Life of Moses. We study free of human prejudices to see what God has to say on any subject. Our Bible study is held each Friday from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

The church at Tafara is fully autonomous. They run their own affairs apart from any of our influence as missionaries. Bro. Sheba is doing a good work at Zengeza. The congregation is growing as the Lord adds those who are being saved. Bro. and Sr. Mengel both teach Bible classes there. Bro. Mengel teaches the men and Sr. Mengel the women.

Bro. Nyazema is doing a good work as a Chaplain in the Rhodesian Army, and has led several to Christ. The Waterfalls church

baptistry is used by several congregations to baptize those who accept Christ.

Remember to pray for us, and for others here in the work.

Ruth & Alex Wilson

Manila, Phillipines

February 6, 1978

We closed 1977 rejoicing that 42 persons had come to the Lord in our Manila churches. Three men among these have all suffered some great trial (accident, family illness, etc.) since their conversions. This often happens and seems to me to parallel our Lord's temptation after His baptism. Now we need to follow up scores of people in our area who responded during the Billy Graham meetings here. Please pray for this.

Alex co-authored a book on cults, and wrote a month's daily devotional notes for Scripture Union during last year. These special assignments were in addition to his regular teaching at CBI, some preaching, and guest speaking.

I've recently seen a hemotologist, who gave my blood various tests and was fully satisfied that it is not abnormally low. So the fears of a number of months (fostered by doctors) were unfounded. The low counts are just natural for me, she said. We are very thankful for all your prayers for our health and energy. We still need them.

Thomas W. Hartle

Cape Town, R.S.A.

January 23, 1978

Have not much news at the moment. With the year of 1978 already begun, have already arranged to show a series of film strip visual aids, in two families' homes in the same area about 8 miles from my apartment, one for the evening of the 24th of January and the other for 31st of January, Lord willing. Ask you all to pray that its results might be fruitbearing to the Glory of God.

And am at the moment waiting for the confirmation, for me to conduct a gospel campaign with one of the local congregations, as to the dates and the possibility to hire a large school hall. In the same school where this congregation meets every Sunday morning and evening, in a class room of the school. Busy visiting and preaching at various congregations on Sundays, and to assist when called upon to do so, in my present status of a "traveling Evangelist". By my visits with them I feel assured they are encouraged therby to the Glory of God.

But most of all ask you to share in your prayers, to the intent that God might lead the way, to show me, where I should start a new work, which is still my hopeful intentions. But I have never in my years of experience rushed into things, pertaining to the "spiritual" and the extension of God's kingdom. So leave it all to Him be it His will. And may the year of 1978, to all who realize they have a great responsibility, in the reaching of the lost, and to the upbuilding of the Saints, that all efforts in whatever direction, shall serve its purpose, and "bear the fruit accordingly . . . to the praise and glory of God."

# NEWS AND NOTES

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

## ALEX WILSONS TO FURLOUGH

The Alex Wilson family leaves the Philippines on May 7th, aboard a special missionary flight. Destination, Toronto, where Bro. C. V. Wilson will join them for a family reunion. They look forward to attending summer Bible camps for their vacation. Vacation?

Is the VOCAL MUSIC CAMP that was mentioned in the January issue of EXHORTER really going to materialize?

## BUECHEL CHURCH, LOUISVILLE

Has your Sunday school class taken a field trip recently? The class at Buechel that Bro. Mike Sanders teaches is considering "DEATH AND DYING AS A CHRISTIAN" and recently held their class at a funeral home where the director acquainted them with the aspects of death and his responsibility. A former member, an attorney, will meet with them soon to discuss the legal aspects of death.

The Young People under Bro. Mike Wilson's leadership meet from time to time in the home of a shut-in and conduct prayer service.

For several years women from Buechel have alternated bi-weekly with women from Highview to give shampoos and otherwise help with the grooming needs of those at Maple Manor Sr. Division.

## HIGHVIEW'S NEW MINISTER

A new face in the pulpit at Highview March 5th! For most of the Sundays in the last thirty-five years Bro. Ed Schreiner has filled that need.

Now the Rick Coleman family have accepted the leadership. Welcome!

A visual SURVEY OF THE BIBLE has been the theme of the Wed. night service at Fern Creek this season. The young adults meet together for Bible study and discussion on Saturday evenings. This is an open class. You might call 239-3847 for details.

The class on THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY on Wednesdays at South Lou. Church is open to all adults. FORT WAYNE BIBLE COLLEGE SINGERS replaced the usual activities on Wed. March 8th with a most enjoyable and spiritually worthwhile program.

No shut-in need be without consistent and profitable Bible study with so much to choose from on station WFIA. And many of the good things are rerun on their FM station at night. They will gladly send you a schedule.

Help make the news of the churches a forecast of opportunities by sending in your plans for the summer. We don't always like to be looking back over our shoulder at what has already happened.

On March 11, Bro. Howard Marsh was host for the Church Leaders Breakfast perhaps for the last time as Director of the Junior Division of Maple Manor. 47 brethren were at the breakfast.

Maple Manor is indeed a monumental service for the Lord.

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January issue just arrived today and very good article by Alex Wilson. It's one many need to read

Mrs. J. Buchanan