

# THE WORD AND WORK

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

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## In This Issue

God's Family —Except One Be Born Again . . . —W.R.H.	-	194
Questions Asked of Us —Carl Kitzmiller	- - - - -	196
Reflections on the Restoration Movement —Larry Miles	- -	199
Viewing the News —Jack Blaes	- - - - -	202
Thoughts From Romans —Ernest E. Lyon	- - - - -	204
Reprint —The Indispensible Gift —Stanford Chambers	-	206
MISSIONARY MESSENGER	- - - - -	207
The Stone Becomes a Great Mountain —W. J. Johnson	- -	210
Bible Exposition—Matthew —S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.	- - -	214
Knowing of Whom Thou Hast Learned —Stanford Chambers		220
NEWS AND NOTES	- - - - -	223
Joy Letter From Saudi Arabia	- - - - -	224

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## God's Family

W. R. H.

### Except One Be Born Again . . .

The expression "born again" has come into such familiarity that I fear many who use it are forgetting who first introduced the expression and gave us its meaning. It is a bit unfortunate that the King James version has rendered it "born again," rather than "born from above," in John 3:3. And, the same error was made again in translating verse seven, thus compounding the problem. A footnote is given in both places, supplying the proper meaning, however.

But what is even more important, is that Jesus prefaced the expression with: "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, *except* one be born (from above) he cannot see the kingdom of heaven." This makes the new birth an essential of salvation. Since Christians are those who have accepted the salvation of Jesus Christ, then all Christians can rightly be called "born again."

Since, then, the new birth is the all-important beginning of the Christian life, and without having been so "born from above" we cannot see the kingdom of God, are there any signs or evidences that we have had this necessary initiation into eternal life? Jesus was kind to Nicodemus and to us, in going on to explain just what He was speaking of. First of all, He stated that being born another time, again of the flesh, would profit nothing, since all that could follow would be the same flesh-life. Rather, the new birth of which He spoke was of water and of the Spirit. We will consider these elements later, but here we must see that both are listed as co-important, being joined with the conjunction "and." Some feel that "water" here refers to human birth and the "spirit" refers to the new life from above. Of course there must be human birth before there is a soul who needs salvation. And it is evident that the "Spirit" element is that which is from above. But I think that water baptism is also in view here, taking its place in the process, where we in many later passages

can find it as a definite step of submission of will and obedience to God's instructions.

Let us dwell more on the Spirit's portion and alteration of the convert. Jesus used the figure of "the wind," which is air *in motion*, and the same Greek word is later translated spirit. He pointed out that we could sense the wind by hearing it and seeing its effects. "The wind bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Several thoughts are nestled in this analogy. First, the wind itself is not seen, but its effects are clearly seen. Second, it bloweth where it wants to. Third, it does not blow continuously. Fourth, it can vary from the gentle breeze to the violent hurricane. Fifth, it is a gracious gift of God.

Peter's first sermon ended with a command to be baptized, and a promise of the receiving of the Holy Spirit. This is the new "breath of God" that generates and sustains the new life from God. The birth in water (baptism) is man's part, and the birth in the Spirit is God's part, which is a continuing, powerful, cleansing, and sustaining work that is performed within us.

Just as the wind will make itself evident, so will the "being born of the Spirit." We are accustomed to speak of it as conversion, and indeed it is. *Conversion* means to make a complete change in an article, so as to do a different work, or to use a different fuel, or to produce a different kind of power, or to change the very structure of a thing. No wonder we say that a Christian is a changed man! No wonder the people took knowledge of the early saints, that "they had been with Jesus"!

The Holy Spirit that is within the believer will bear certain definite evidences, and if these evidences are absent, we can conclude that there is no new birth. Galatians 5:22-24 needs to be quoted in this context: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law." One might not presume to call himself a "born again" Christian, but the fact will speak for itself. And remember, "Ye must be born again!"



## Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

### The Printers Erred Last Month

Due to a proof-reading error, a line was omitted from the June issue, p. 173, first full paragraph. The end of the paragraph should read:

You and I need that same concern. We must not let our standards be set by the world and its philosophies. Rather they must be set by the word of God and the principles therein. We must be servants of God.

Our apologies to Bro. Kitzmiller for so distorting the meaning of his text. —*The Printers*

What makes old people so unyielding to new ideas? Some of our churches are dying because of resistance to change.

It would be nice if all problems were as simple as some people wish to make them. I have no doubt that some churches are dying and that resistance to change may be a factor involved. But not all of the starry-eyed advocates of change have the correct analysis or the foolproof answers that they think they have, either. It is likely true that as people grow older there is a greater resistance to change. A fairly observant person does learn a few things by experience and is not so ready to follow every new idea just because it is new. If one has had his shins barked a few times in the process of running after promising ideas that were duds, it stands to reason that he might be a bit more careful the next time. But I have found closed minds to be something not exclusive with old folks.

A few years ago I had an experience with a group of senior-age campers which made me realize that in some matters young people can be just about as much hide-bound traditionalists as anyone else. "We have always done it this way," can be the cry of youth as well as age. "Always" in such a case does not have to span a lot of years.

We are often very subjective when it comes to rating people as to resistance to or acceptance of change. The people who like our new ideas are considered to be open-minded, alert to progress, and forward-looking people. Those who do not like our new ideas are dull traditionalists, non-progressive, unwilling to accept any-

thing new, and just old stick-in-the-muds. Moreover, Monday morning quarterbacking is an affliction of both young and old. It is always so much easier to blame the other person for the woes of the team, or of society, or of the church. Of course, if they had only used our own brilliant idea...! Talk is cheap.

It gives me grief to hear older Christians unfairly critical of the younger members of the Body, and to hear younger Christians unfairly grouching about the stupidity and the lack of vision of the older Christians. In a sense some of this is normal, just as the teen years are sometimes marked by a false evaluation of parents by child and a lack of awareness of development in the youth by the parent. However, some of our modern methods and approaches tend to magnify rather than minimize these differences, both in the home and in the church. The church needs both its young and its old. Without the young a congregation is just one generation from extinction. Without the old it may be only one generation (or two) from apostasy. The healthiest situation is not where the young people run things or the old people run things but where all are considered brethren and seek to have each one fill his rightful place.

Age is not synonymous with spirituality or wisdom. One could easily find a lot of gray heads, "in the church" for fifty years, who are yet babes in Christ and are carnal, not spiritual. Their only wisdom is largely a wisdom of this world. We are sometimes almost overwhelmed by the realization of how prevalent this is. A man might absorb a little over the years, but generally speaking, the decisions and pursuits of such a one will be as carnal and worldly, as lacking in spiritual content, as those of the very young and immature. One can also find Christian young people who are wise beyond their years and who show a knowledge of spiritual things far surpassing what one might expect. Youth does not have to mean carnality, and age does not necessarily signify spirituality.

Nevertheless, *other things being equal*, there is an advantage to age. The Lord has committed the oversight of His church to elders—older men. He has seen fit that those who fill this office should manifest certain qualities, some of which require age and experience. He did not commit the church into the hands of beginners or novices. Ideally, these are men of mature understanding in doctrine, able to judge the new idea not only as to its immediate effect but able to see ahead and also able to judge as to its scripturalness. There is a balanced judgment and a mellowing that come with age which is gained in no other way.

In practice, elders are never perfect—they belong to the human race. And some have become elders who are about as fitted for the job as a left-handed monkey wrench for turning screws. But it is a sad day for the church of the Lord when proven and reasonably qualified men are not accepted as leaders or when

these leaders feel they have to dance to the tune piped by the young, the inexperienced, and often the carnal.

Of course change is sometimes needed. If people are holding to the truth of God there should not be any veering from that. Even in this, however, if there has been truth before unperceived or that from which there has been a drift, any drawing closer to the teaching of the Word is to be encouraged. Change of method which does not compromise truth may sometimes be needed, in an effort to reach a changing age or peoples of different background. Even change for the sake of variety, if it does not compromise the truth nor selfishly disturb the church, is acceptable. It is very unfortunate when those who make up a given congregation do not have the discernment needed to bring about this kind of change. People can settle into a rut, unwilling to do anything different, mistaking sameness for faithfulness! It may be such a situation the questioner has in mind. It is not so much that unwillingness to change will lead to death as it is that a certain deadness has led to the static situation.

But I have also noticed a trend in which there is a call for change *which does compromise truth*. Whether by ignorance, lack of spiritual growth, rebellion, or whatever, there is sometimes a willingness to trim here and there, sacrificing a part of the whole-counsel of God for the sake of what is seen as greater success. Of course we have to allow a certain freedom of conscience in issues that are not specifically treated or about which the Word may be indefinite, but there is a body of truth to which Christians ought to be committed and which they have no right to change for any reason. The world is full of religious bodies which bear little resemblance to the church of the Lord Jesus because they have, for a variety of reasons, accepted change from Biblical truth. It may have resulted in growth for them; a watered-down, doctored version of spiritual truth seems to "sell" better than the truth. People without discernment or ability to take any solid nurture may be deceived thereby. It may look like success to the worldly and the weak. The workman of God who handles aright the word of truth may be regarded as an outdated number by those who want this kind of change, but this refusal has the approval of God.

Too often today the changes advocated and introduced are the brain-children of the spiritually immature, who know too little of the Bible to have much bearing on matters. They are voted on and adopted in a democratic fashion by more of the same. These then suppose that such majority vote makes it right. Those opposed "just ought to move into the twentieth century" with them.

If a young or inexperienced Christian (or an old but not spiritually-literate Christian) proposes a new idea and finds that idea resisted by good, solid, spiritually-mature men noted for their discernment, he will do far better to reexamine that idea and

seek fuller understanding than to act in brazen independence and insist that those men are merely old fogies without whom the church could make some progress. On the other hand, God's people need to be alert to legitimate change which improves, not sleeping away with the senility of old age. Age does not need jealousy to guard its power. Thank God for those who have not fallen into discouragement, who have good new ideas that breathe life into His work. And let us not use these things to drive a wedge between the young and the old. There are some unsavory characters and some gems in both groups, and some who fall somewhere between.

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## Reflections On The Restoration Movement

Larry Miles

### **Hope on the Horizon: The Early Work of the Campbells**

Since the establishment of the church on the Day of Pentecost, the Lord has always had those who were, and are, true to Him. Although we realize that through the apostasy of the Roman Catholic Church and other "so-called" religious bodies many were deceived and lost, the words of Christ in Matthew 16:18 were not in vain. The Gates of Hades had not in the late 1700's, and have not yet, prevailed against the church of Christ.

So, in a myriad of religious confusion, what we today call the Restoration Movement had its beginnings. The pioneers saw that the church that the Lord built was already one. They also realized that Christians had been splintered into many different denominations. As Thomas Campbell said, their aim was to "unite the Christians in all the sects." Their aim was to get all people to accept the Bible as the only true guide. Their aim was not to start another denomination as they realized that denominations were contrary to the Word of God. Leroy Garrett, writing in *Restoration Review*, writes these words, "Our pioneers, drawing upon the resources of their own heritage, came to see the essential unity of the Body of Christ and the horrid evil of division." This is what prompted Thomas Campbell to write these words in the "Declaration and Address": "That division among Christians is a horrid evil, fraught with many evils... In a word, it is pro-

ductive of confusion and of every evil work." We would like to take a little time now to trace the beginnings of the work of the Campbells, focusing first on Thomas Campbell.

On Thursday, June 29, 1978, I traveled to Bethany, West Virginia. Bethany is nestled in the rolling hills of the West Virginia panhandle. It is about 20 miles northeast of Wheeling, sitting a scant 2½ miles from the Pennsylvania line. It is here that those of us who are heirs of a glorious movement can trace our roots. Bethany is where much of our history took place. Although Bethany College, founded by Alexander Campbell, is now under control of the Disciples of Christ, there is still an atmosphere of "holy ground" there. If we were to have "holy places" Bethany, along with Cane Ridge, Kentucky (the site of the labors of Barton W. Stone), and other localities would be included. But since we don't have "sacred places," Bethany must be considered from a human standpoint. There is a historical marker, put up by the State of West Virginia, on the road just outside the Campbell Mansion. It reads as follows: "ALEXANDER CAMPBELL: Here lived the leading influence in America's largest indigenous movement..." But we want to go beyond Bethany to trace our roots. We want to center our attention on Thomas Campbell, the father of Alexander Campbell.

Thomas Campbell was born in 1763 in Ireland of Roman Catholic parents who converted to the Anglican Church. He later identified himself with the Presbyterians and decided he wanted to preach among them. The results of division were evident to Thomas Campbell even in the 1780's. He was no stranger to religious division. Thomas Campbell was a minister in the Old Light Anti-Burgher Seceder Presbyterian Church. Viewing this example of sectarianism led Thomas Campbell to rely less on human creeds and statements of faith and rely more on the Bible, the Word of God. Thomas Campbell believed and preached that one should study the Word of God. He committed much of the Bible to memory, which would help him in his last days, as he was blind and had to preach from memory. It would take the Campbells a while to completely come out of denominationalism, but it would come.

Thomas Campbell, because of his health, came to America in 1807. He bid his family goodbye and went to prepare a place for them in the new world. His family would follow him later. He arrived in Philadelphia just as the Associated Synod of North America was meeting. This synod was over all Seceder Presbyterians. He presented his ministerial credentials to them and was assigned an itinerant ministry in western Pennsylvania under the authority of the Chartiers Presbytry.

The Anti-Burgher Seceder Presbyterians were a very sectarian sort. A minister was expected not to have fellowship with any not

of his own party. They were most certainly not to offer other Presbyterians and other denominations the opportunity to partake of the Lord's Supper. Thomas Campbell's days as a Presbyterian were numbered because he did both of these things. He was brought before the Presbytery for trial. This series of hearings was to last about two years, but midway Thomas Campbell withdrew from the Presbyterian Church to go his own way as a free man in Christ. We should be reminded of the fact that we as Christians are a free people; we are not under the bondage of partyism. This reminds us of a passage in the book of Galatians that fits this situation. Please consider it in light of your own relationship to Christ. In Galatians 4:22-31 we read the words of Paul:

For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. This contains an allegory: for these women are two covenants, one proceeding from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our Mother. For it is written, Rejoice, Barren woman who does not bear; break forth and shout, you who are not in labor; for more are the children of the desolate than of the one who has a husband. And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. But what does the Scripture say? Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be an heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman" (N.A.S.B.)

Think about it, are we free in Christ or are we in bondage to partyism? The Synod of North America suspended Thomas Campbell from his ministerial office on September 13, 1808.

What would happen to Thomas Campbell without a party to support him? Leroy Garrett writes these words in Restoration Review, "Thomas Campbell was now 46 and alone in a new land, his church having rejected him and his family delayed in Europe because of a shipwreck. But God blesses His children who are besieged by angry men with new friends, and they soon discover that they have more brothers and sisters than they realize. Such was the case with Campbell, for God gave him so many new friends and brethren that he launched an effort 'to unite the Christians in all the sects.' His plea became the union of the divided church on the basis of the Bible. Barred from churches, he took his pleas to homes and barns, and his summer meetings were held out of doors under the trees. Large numbers came to hear his cry for the oneness of the church

and the unity of all believers. He deplored partisan divisions, called for a faith and practice based upon the Bible alone, and encouraged Christians to cooperate with each other." Yes, friends, let us be free in Christ.

A few people in Washington, Pennsylvania, asked Thomas Campbell to meet with them for fellowship and study. This group was to be called the Christian Association of Washington, Pennsylvania. They asked Thomas Campbell to draw up a document on his views on working for unity within the body of Christ and for bringing about New Testament Christianity. This document was to be the Magna Carta of a movement to get back to a "thus saith the Lord." May we always be striving to do our best to reach the whole world with the whole Gospel and try to preach them the principles of New Testament Christianity before Jesus comes.

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## *Viewing the News*

Jack Blaes

"THE BATTLE FOR THE FUTURE of both Christianity and the United States is now underway, and the battleground is the Christian school." This is a quote from a book by Alan N. Grover, *Ohio's Trojan Horse*. Pub. Bob Jones University Press, Inc., Greenville, South Carolina. You should read it.

JUNE 14-16, FRANKFORT, KY. In Judge Meigs' Commonwealth Court the Kentucky Association of Christian Schools were contesting the State's right to prescribe such regulations as teacher certification and text-book lists, and even the State's right to "approve" a private school, giving it the right to exist. The State's attorney was the ex-governor, and a very skilled lawyer, the Honorable Bert T. Combs, and K.A.C.S. was represented by constitutional lawyer, Mr. William B. Ball, Harrisburg, Pa., who is well-known for his defense of Christian liberty.

It seems at the present time that the case may be decided as far as the lower court is concerned before school opens in the fall. Christians need to be much in prayer about the outcome of this case.

**DUE TO WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE IN HEW:** Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Joseph Califano announced that his department had "misspent" between \$6.3 billion and \$7.4 billion in fiscal 1977 due to waste, fraud and abuse. The report itself stressed that those figures are "no more than an initial inventory and they portray a conservative measure of the extent of the fraud, abuse and waste in key HEW programs, and their causes."

Since this report is the first of its kind, it is not possible to make a reliable comparison to rip-offs in previous years. In case you would like to waste \$7 billion, you would have

to wasts \$19 million every day for 365 days. How the government gets \$7 billion to waste or whatever else it does with it: it takes it from five million households with an income of \$15,000 each. This is nothing short of an outrage! But, if not a greater outrage, at least equally so, is the reaction of the news media to this outrageous report. For instance, the New York Times noted the HEW report in a six-inch article at the bottom of page 18. The Washington Post, in a four-inch story, played it at the bottom of page two. NBC-TV ran it ninth among 17 news items. Then it took them only one minute and 31 seconds to report to the taxpayers a \$7 billion rip-off. CBS gave it more coverage—11 seconds more. ABC said it all in 27 seconds. I've had my fill of Watergate, but this is ridiculous. Suppose, just suppose, that this admission had come from Secretary Brown of Defense. I only hazard a guess, but I feel sure that it would have gotten as much coverage as the (remember?) Lt. Calley case. Do you smell a rat called bias in news reporting?

**UNIVERSAL FREE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM.** Proposed by Sen. Robert Morgan (D-N.C.) who reasons(?), "A free school lunch would not be another unnecessary government handout. Government requires children to attend school. It pays for their transportation and instruction, buys bats and balls and their textbooks. But, at lunchtime, children are expected to hand over varying amounts of money. Being singled out for a free or greatly reduced-price lunch is degrading to a child." The cost? Well, Sen. Morgan doesn't really know, but he thinks it would "not cost much more than what is being spent now." I have heard it said: "There is no such thing as a free lunch."

**AMERICAN MANUFACTURERS SHOW LATEST SECURITY DEVICES** at a week-long exhibition in Moscow. The exhibitors showed gadgets ranging from microphone pickups and television monitors to beams that can detect a person by the temperature changes in a room. Marshall Goldman, a Wellesley College professor and specialist on the

Soviet econmy, says that the exhibition is "terrible" because it could provide the Reds with more sophisticated equipment to track down opponents of the Kremlin. "An American manufacturer of such equipment who wants to go to the Soviet Union to sell should have his conscience to deal with," says Goldman. And I say he's right.

**REPORT OF THE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL.** The number of legal abortions in the United States increased 16 percent from 1975 to 1976. There were 988,267 legal abortions in 1976. Of these 65% of the women involved were under 25 years of age, 67% were white, 75% were unmarried, and 48% had no other living children.

**POWs VISIT NIXON.** Over 250 former American prisoners of war in Vietnam heard the former President tell them that they have left the United States a "legacy which will inspire Americans for years to come." He also told them that of all the famous persons who have come to his San Clemente residence, "no one has honored this house more than you have honored it." Speaking for the POWs, Air Force Major General John P. Flynn thanks Nixon for ordering the heavy bombing of North Vietnam in December 1972 which led to their release, and says, "We owe you an eternal gratitude which it will be impossible for us ever to discharge. We want to tell you, 'God bless you.'"

**HOW SOME PEOPLE EARN THEIR SPENDING MONEY.** Louis Almeida, a confessed "career criminal" appearing as a government witness in a robbery trial, has admitted under cross-examination that he was hired by a Yugoslavian Communist leader to assassinate ten leading Croats in America for \$10,000 each. He was on his way to Pittsburg to carry out one of the assassinations when he was arrested in Toledo in 1975. At the time he was carrying a silencer-equipped gun and a photograph of his intended victim circled in red. Almeida also admitted selling guns to a Yugoslavian Communist he knew as Tony for use by Arab terrorists plotting a series of murders.

**A TIMELY WARNING FROM ITALY.** Indro Mountanelli, a courageous crusading Italian editor and the principal target of the Red Brigade terrorists and the Italian Communist party, has a timely warning for Americans: "The violence now taking place in Italy shows that a democracy can't accomodate and cooperate with terrorists and Communists and hope to survive." Shot four times by members of the Red Brigade, this undaunted editor avails himself of every opportunity to pass along this warning to visiting U.S. lawmakers and officials of any and all degrees.

Most disturbing to Mountanelli is that the destruction of the intelligence and security agencies, which was the forerunner to the rise of terrorism in Italy, is now being repeated in the U.S.

In Italy the Communists called for the demolition of the intelligence agencies. The Christian Democrats (the party in power) gave in to them. Again they demanded the removal of prefects and police heads who had

given any evidence of efficiency; the Christian Democrats obeyed. Today, the Christian Democrats still have their fingers on all the controls, but when they choose a button to press it is always a Communist who answers the summons and who undertakes to translate the orders into practice. The main architect of this policy of accomodating the Communists in Italy was Moro, the veteran leader of the Christian Democratic Party.

**BETTER LOOK OUT.** A Los Angeles bank wrote one of its customers who was behind in his car payments: "This is a reminder from your friendly computer. You are \$48.88 in arrears in your payments. Please remit. If you do not, next time you will have to deal with a human."

**IF THE NEWS DISTURBS YOU,** I have some hope. Conditions have always pointed out to us our need of Divine help. We need to pray, and seek God for guidance as to what actions He would have us take.

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



## THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

### Are You Ashamed?

In Romans 1:14-16 Paul makes three statements about himself that should be true of every Christian. The first one, "I am debtor," is true of every Christian even though many do not acknowledge the debt to bring the gospel to every man. The other two are not necessarily true of you simply because you are a Christian, but you should be ashamed of yourself if they are not true of your life. You should be eager to speak the gospel to others and you should not be ashamed of that gospel.

"I am not ashamed of the gospel," says Paul. Someone has aptly called that a masterpiece of understatement. The gospel was something in which Paul gloried, but the context of what he is

writing here makes this negative statement very appropriate. How I hope that every person looking at my life will recognize that this negative way of saying that the writer is not ashamed of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ is also an understatement for me!

Satan tries very hard, and succeeds too many times, to make every Christian ashamed to tell others that he believes that the only hope, and the assured hope, of man to be saved is to believe that Jesus of Nazareth's death was God's way of providing salvation for men, that His blood cleanses us from all sin, that His resurrection provides us with life abundantly. Just as in Paul's day the people of the city to which he was writing this letter worshipped power and found no power in the weakness of a crucifixion death by a Jewish itinerant teacher who was rejected by His own people and nailed to a cross by a division of the Roman government, so today there are many kinds of beliefs that reject the gospel. Romans worshipped the power of their army, considering that the success of their force in subjugating other lands was proof that there was something divine about their leaders, their mission. Even so today men judge the gospel by other standards and find it lacking in the things they admire. The reasons for rejecting the gospel and shaming those who believe it vary from person to person, but the method of Satan of trying to silence Christians by making them feel that others will think they are strange, or foolish, or ridiculous if they speak up for Christ has not changed.

If Paul had been more concerned with what others thought of him than of what Christ thought of him then he would have forgotten his debt to the Romans, would not have been eager to tell them the good news, would have been ashamed of the gospel. But Paul's heart was properly fixed on what the Lord thought and on the need of others. And he realized how wrong the Romans were when they thought that man's power expressed in an army was greater than the power he was preaching. He knew that the gospel was God's power unto salvation. Literally he said of the gospel, "it is God's power unto salvation" and he gave that as the reason he was not ashamed of it. Today's armies have a great deal more "power" than the armies in Paul's day, but that power still does not approach the power that God has.

Paul, of course, is not speaking here of God's power in general, but of God's power in one specific field, a field that is of prime importance to every man whether he knows it or not. Even though the gospel has had many varying results in the history of man, its power is unto salvation and that is why we should be preaching it.

But, in conclusion, may I remind you that many people will quote Paul's statement in verse 16 as their own but will be claiming something of themselves that is not true. At heart they are

really ashamed of the gospel. They do not believe it will do any good for the ones to whom they should be witnessing, they are ashamed of saying anything if others "turn up their noses" at them for such "foolish belief," they are more concerned about their personal reputations than of turning loose in their community God's power unto salvation. Let us each one face up to this verse and see whether or not we are really unashamed of the gospel. We can easily judge that by remembering how often we have avoided speaking about it when others around had such great need of this great power to turn their lives around. If we are content to go through life keeping the good news of the death and resurrection of Christ to ourselves, finding countless reasons why we should not speak to this one or to that one, then we are ashamed. Let us reverse that so He will not be ashamed of us and so many others we love can find the way to God.

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## REPRINTS:

### The Indispensable Gift

Stanford Chambers -1922

Christianity begins and continues in love. Christianity is love's overflow. It goes as far as love goes and stops where love stops. Love is its heart and soul and life. As the body without the spirit is dead, so Christianity without love is dead and profitless. This is true of any of its forms of activity, whether preaching, prophesying, miracle working, sacrificing or martyrdom. For "if I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries, and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Cor. 13:1-3). John shows other consequences of the absence of this gift: "He that loveth not, knoweth not God." "He that loveth not abideth in death."

How then can we come into possession of this gift? Note that it is a gift. "Because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which he hath given unto us." It comes not by command, nor by resolution, nor by force of will. It cannot be generated by the human soul. It cannot be pumped up out of a dry heart. "The fruit of the Spirit is love." "We love because He first loved us." God fills the Christian's heart with His own love. He fills to overflowing, and the overflow is back to Himself and on to our brother and neighbor. And this flow of love—God-love—is Christianity, life. Stop the flow and the result is death. "He that loveth not— abideth

in death." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." In regeneration and the new birth, and the reception of the Holy Spirit therewith, our hearts receive Him who bestows the gift of love, the greatest of all His gifts.

The manifestations of love are both positive and negative. "Love suffereth long and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth." Love keeps the Master's Word. Love gives, loves prays, love serves, love covers a multitude of sins, love puts the best construction, love fulfills all law. Love does not gossip, does not slander, does not whisper, does not snub, is not two-faced, is not double-tongued, is not deceitful, is not hypocritical. Love blesses man and glorifies God. "The greatest of these is love." Oh God, fill us with thy love and then shall we love thy ways and thy house and thy people and thy work and Thyself. Amen.

## Missionary Messenger

*"Greater things for God"*

Alvin Hobby

Livingstone, Zambia

June 5

Last evening, the Hensons and the Mitchells were all here for the usual Sunday evening devotional at our house. All were well, except that Bro. Henson had had a bee sting which caused one eye still to look swollen. Bees in this country are vicious, but not so much during the cool weather.

Georgia is continuing with her 21 class periods a week, teaching "Religious Knowledge" to 7th grade pupils in three primary schools of Livingstone.

Recently I finished reading, correcting, and criticizing a Tonga manuscript of 1 Kings; and just now I am waiting for more to come.

Leonard and Mabel Bailey

Bulawayo, Rhodesia

June 21

We are experiencing our cold weather with two or three degrees of white frost at night. It does not seem very much, perhaps, but we feel it here after so much heat, with very little heating in our homes.

Bro. Mlangeni was here for a few days to arrange about coming for two months beginning in August. He expects to come with his wife and bring one student from the Bible school to do

evangelistic work in the area. We look forward to their coming and pray that the Lord will bless these efforts.

Word came about a month ago that Bro. Pilate had been abducted into Botswana, so we have no idea where he may be. We received a letter from his wife and son a few days ago and are trying to get some help to them.

We had a visit from brethren Edwin and Davison, whose homes are at Siwazi. They had been home for the weekend and reported that the Christians at Siwazi are doing well and sent their greetings to us. How much we miss being able to visit them. It gives us encouragement to know that they are faithful.

Bro. Edwin still does not have work; he and Bro. Mahlomola are helping the church at Magwegwe with teaching children's Bible classes. Bro. Mahlomola has found work here in Bulawayo; they both completed the three year course at Umtali Bible School in December last year.

Friday evening we had the young people here for the evening. Mabel cooked a big pot of soup and made a batch of bread; it was a cold evening and hot soup went down well. This was followed by a devotional at which I had been invited to give a short talk. The evening was finished off with games. About 23 young people and leaders were here and enjoyed a pleasant time together. About half the young people are from families who are not members of the church, and we feel this is a great opportunity to reach out into the community. Some are also regular in Sunday school attendance.

May the Lord's blessings be with each one of you is our prayer. Pray for the Christians here that they may be faithful especially those who live out in the village areas, where one young brother has already given his life rather than deny his Lord.

Addie Brown

Salisbury, Rhodesia

July 3

No doubt you have heard of the mass killings in Rhodesia. The massacre of the thirteen whites was terrible. There has been a closing down of all missions, I believe. The thirteen were on a mission station near Umtali, an Elam Pentecostal mission. A large Baptist mission closed a couple of weeks ago when one of their men was murdered by terrorists. A Catholic mission was closed last week. Nhowe is still operating, but no white missionaries are there.

We have had good meetings here so far. We were sorry to say good-bye to two of our good young men yesterday, as they have to go for 18 months of army training. Last Sunday two responded to the invitation.

We are grateful for the prayers of God's people for us from over there. Things may look dark and uncertain, yet we know that God is still on the throne. We look to Him for guidance.

Schichiro Nakahara

Shizuoka City, Japan

May 22

As part of our leadership training we have a study going now on Wednesday evenings. We've been studying about "the things to come" right at present. We are dealing with the great doctrines of the Bible in general. A tape is made for each class or lesson for those who couldn't be present. We've been trying to make the best use of the tape. I'm very much encouraged by a keen interest among those attending.

I've also started visiting homes in the neighborhood with the booklets I've written myself. I'm to write one for each month as long as I can be allowed. Most of the homes are closed to the Gospel except for one. I am looking for some like Paul of old. We're responsible for sowing the seeds of the Gospel everywhere and anywhere, but the good ground is limited.

We've had our second early Sunday morning prayer meeting and we had more than we did last time. We spent about an hour in praying together. Oh, how wonderful and refreshing it is to get together early in the morning to pray, and we prayed earnestly that the Lord may fill all of us with the Spirit, apart from Him we can do nothing. We had two members who came rather far away, and had them over and served them breakfast that Teruko fixed. This gave us a good opportunity of having a fellowship in the Lord. We do want you all to remember us in our making efforts to strengthen the work here.

We have one young man who comes all the way from Hamamatsu, which is about a two hour drive. He wishes to be a Christian but has not come to the point yet. He used to go to a denominational church in town where he lives, but somehow he has taken a keener interest in us and ever since he is coming, though not every Sunday. We wish you to pray for him.

Elaine Brittell

Livingstone, Zambia

July 10

Gladys, my younger sister, and her family have returned to South Africa after nearly five years in the U.S.A. It's so good to have some of my family back in Africa. Gladys is hoping to fly up for a visit, Lord willing. It takes three months to get a visa, so I am not sure when she will come.

The church had a booth at the Livingstone Agricultural Show on July 1 and 2. Over 3000 pieces of literature were given to those asking to read about God. The following day four were baptized and now the location of the church is known and more are coming to worship services. May God give a harvest of souls saved is our prayer.

# Understanding The Scriptures

W. J. Johnson

## *The Stone Becomes a Great Mountain*

The last article closed with the stone that struck the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's image and broke them to pieces and became a great mountain and filled the whole world and also with Jesus Christ's reign with His saints.

At the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:16; 19:11-22) the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled (Lk. 21:20-24). For all Gentile empires were destroyed and blown away as chaff of the threshing floor. Therefore the Kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ: The twenty-four elders who sit on thrones before God in their worship and praise of God, said "We thank thee, O God, the Almighty who art and who wast, that didst take thy great power and dost reign" (Rev. 11:16, 18). Thus the kingdom of Daniel 2:33-35, 44 is established and will continue for ever and ever.

The qualifications of the King are supernatural according to the word of Isaiah, the prophet, who foretold that one of the seed of David should rule and judge. His words are the following: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots; and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (Isaiah 11:1, 2).

And again: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

And the manner of His government shall surpass that of earthly governments. "Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." (Isa. 9:7) And again in Isaiah 11:3-5, "And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins."

As it is written in Psalms 2:6: "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." ".for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their

swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isa. 2:3,4.)

Now it is reasonable to believe that the things which Isaiah mentioned above in his words of prophecy belong to the age to come and not to the church age, because they do not fit in the present age of grace. But let that be as it may, Jesus in Matthew 25:31-46 gives us an example of His judging the nations when He shall sit on the throne of His glory. He judges them according to their works, the manner of treatment which they gave the least of his brethren. The language is clear enough for us to understand. He is judging nations, and not individuals. According to their works, not according to grace through faith in Christ Jesus as the Son of God. So let us read: "When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me,' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

In Revelation 26:4, John said, "And I saw thrones, and they that sat upon them, to them was given judgment." Now what John saw above is in accord with a promise that Jesus made his disciples in Matthew 19:28, "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Therefore we believe Israel

has been restored to her home land in fulfillment of this scripture. Not only this but of other scriptures.

However it was necessary for Israel to “repent and turn to God that their sins may be blotted out, and that seasons of refreshing should come, and that He (God) may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you. For the heavens must receive him until the times of restoration whereof God hath spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets.” (Acts 3:1-21). It is evident that the attitude of Israel had to change toward God. For it is clear that the rulers rejected Christ Jesus as their King, when he entered Jerusalem riding upon an ass. He was grieved over Jerusalem’s attitude and closed his short speech with the words “ye shall see me no more henceforth, till ye shall say blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” (Matthew 21:37-39).

At the time that the king of the north established his place between the sea and Jerusalem (Daniel 11:45) and came to his end and no one could help him, Michael the arch-angel, prince of the people of Israel stood up for them and they were delivered. And then there was great trouble such as never was before nor ever shall be. Jeremiah 30:7 calls it the hour of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.” (Read verses 4 to 11.) But let us read verses 8 and 9, “And it shall come to pass in that day, says the Lord of hosts, that I will break the yoke from off their neck, and I will burst their bonds, and strangers shall no more make servants of them. But they shall serve the Lord their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.”

In Ezekiel 37:15-28 God fortold that He would unite the two divisions of Israel and bring them back to their own land, that He would gather them from all the nations where they had gone and that they should dwell in their own land in the mountains of Israel as one nation, no longer two kingdoms, but one nation under one king, that one king should be their king, that would never serve idols and worship and observe the evil customs of the nations, and that He would cleanse them of their sins; and that He would be their God and they would be His people.

In the above I have just given a brief statement of the contents of what is written in verses 15-23. Nevertheless encouragement is given to read the passage for better understanding of the things God has spoken.

But verses 24-28 are quoted; “My servant David shall be king over them; and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall follow my ordinances and be careful to observe my statutes. They shall dwell in the land where your fathers dwelt that I gave to my servant Jacob; they and their children and their children’s children shall dwell there for ever: and David my servant shall be their prince for ever. I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will bless them and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them evermore. My

dwelling place shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Then the nations will know that I the Lord sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary is in the midst of them for evermore."

According to what Paul wrote the church at Corinth (2 Cor. 6:2,3) Christians will judge the world, and also judge angels. "Know ye not that you shall judge the world, and also know you not that you shall judge angels." Such will evidently be in their reign with Christ.

But let us continue reading Revelation 20:4-6 beginning with verse 5. "And I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead or on their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Therefore the above show an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is being supplied to His faithful servants (2 Pet. 1:1-11).

Nature rejoices over the revealing of the children of God. For then is removed the curse that was placed on the earth when Adam and Eve sinned. "The mountains and the hills sing with joy; the trees clap their hands. Instead of the thorns shall come up the fir tree and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle. For the word of God will not return unto him void. It will accomplish that for which it was sent to do." (Read Isa. 55:6-13; Rom. 8:15-22.) There will be peaceful relations among the animals; "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like an ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:6-9).

"But when the thousand years are finished Satan will be loosed. Then he will deceive the nations and gather them together against the camp of the saints. Fire comes down from heaven and destroys them, and Satan is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are (Revelation 20:7-10). The heavens and the earth have passed away.

From verse 11 to verse 15 is a record of the white throne judgment. The rest of the dead are judged including all who lived during the thousand years. The books are opened and all are judged according to their works. And he whose name is not written in the book of life is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. The last enemy cast into the lake of fire is death. Read 1 Cor. 15:23-28.

The kingdom is given up to the Father.

## Bible Exposition -- Matthew

### Jesus' Knowledge Of His Second Advent

S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.

#### *Introduction*

"A minister," Stephen Travis has related, "was visiting a man who was very ill. At the foot of the stairs the sick man's wife whispered apprehensively, 'Say something *hopeful* to him, won't you?—not about heaven and all that.'"

We can identify with that ridiculous request, because it is so characteristic of the spiritual blindness of man. Just think of it! *Heaven* is not hopeful! Could anything be more hopeful than the promise of heaven from a sovereign and loving Savior? Not to a believer, but what about the unbeliever? Ah! there's the rub. To him the promise of heaven is a reminder of hell, and that's not hopeful. It calls to mind the sentiment expressed by the unknown author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (9:27). And, thus, the promise of a blissful eternity serves to remind the unbeliever of the somber thought of an everlasting separation from God and men under punishment. It is not surprising, then, that the same words call up differing responses.

The Olivet Discourse often provokes the same two responses. To the unbeliever the words of our Lord contain enough warning of dread judgment to terrify the proudest of human hearts. Thoughts of wars, pestilences, earthquakes, mixed with threats of great tribulation and reminders of Noah's flood, reach their climax in the gathering clouds of cosmic disturbances, all having as their purpose the condemnation of the unrighteous unbeliever. It is no wonder that he dreads the most glorious divine visitations.

On the other hand, for the believer the words of our Lord are most comforting. Promises of persecution are tempered by assurances of the preservation of the elect and by the hope of the ultimate solution of earth's problems in the magnificent second advent of the Lord Jesus in power and great glory, and the gathering of the elect to His presence.

The Olivet Discourse to this point has contained an outline of the events of the seventieth week of Israel (cf. Dan. 9:24-27), the time of tribulation that just precedes the Lord's return, and a description of the culminating, cataclysmic circumstances that conclude the period in His advent. From this point on in the discourse the emphasis shifts to a consideration of *how* the events come to pass, and *how* one should live in the light of them. In other words, thoughts of the moral come to the fore, as the doctrine finds its proper application.

But, before this ethical and applicational emphasis becomes prominent, the Lord uses the vivid illustration of the fig tree and "all the trees" (cf. Luke 21:29) to provide further help toward identifying the circumstances and the certainty of the coming. Alfred Plummer's title for the section is, "The Lesson of the Fig-tree; the Certainty of the Event and the Uncertainty of the Time."

## I THE ILLUSTRATION FROM THE FIG TREE

Having just completed His description of the advent, the Lord introduces a lesson from nature to enforce the truth that "coming events cast their shadow before them." There are several things to notice.

(1) First, what is the meaning of the term, "the fig tree"? Let me say, first of all, that the use of the fig tree may have been called forth by the passage from Isaiah 34:4, which He has just referred to in the description of the cosmic agitation accompanying the second coming. It reads, "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together like a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and LIKE A FALLING FIG FROM THE FIG TREE." The illustration, then, lay ready to hand. But, does the use of the term "fig tree" have special significance? There are two views regarding this.

In the first place, some think that the Lord has in mind the Jewish people, claiming that the fig tree is a figure of Israel. One might cite Hosea 9:10 and Joel 1:6-7 in support of this, and, in spite of the objections of some to this, there is some justification for taking the fig tree as a suggestive figure of the nation. That, of course, does not necessarily mean that our Lord had the figure in mind at this point. In the basic passage here, Isaiah 34:4, the reference does not seem to have any relation to the nation.

Others, second, think that our Lord was simply using an illustration from nature to make a temporal point. That which makes this the likely view is the parallel passage in Luke 21:29, which reads, "And he spoke to them in a parable: Behold the fig tree, and ALL THE TREES." It seems plain from this that He is simply illustrating a point from tree culture, one that has no special reference to the fig tree. Those who hold that the fig tree refers to Israel take the passage to mean that, when one sees the nation returning to the land of Palestine, then there is evidence that the Lord's return is near, for the budding of the fig tree is the budding of the nation in its return to the land of promise. It is an interesting interpretation, but it is not convincing in view of Luke 21:29, for the latter verse would then presuppose the revival of all the other nations, too.

We conclude, then, that the Lord is simply saying that, just as the appearance of the leaves on the fig signals the soon coming

of summer, for the figs precede the leaves, so the appearance of the events described in verses 4-28 signals the consummation of the divine program. In other words, as Shelley wrote in *Ode to the West Wind*, "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?" Any easterner, knowing that the characteristic of the fig tree is the appearance of the figs before the leaves, would know, then, that, when the leaves appear, the summer is at hand.

(2) Second, the word "parable" has here the meaning of *lesson*, or *illustration*, or even *analogy*.

(3) Third, the words "is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves" refer to the return of the sap to the branches and the resulting softness from which the leaves come.

## II THE INTERPRETATION OF THE ILLUSTRATION

*Concerning the proximity of the advent* (24:33). The interpretation of the illustration is introduced by the familiar, "So likewise ye." They mark the application of the figure, and several things come before us.

(1) First, what is meant by "all these things"? The simplest and most convincing view is to take the words to refer to the things set forth in the earlier part of the discourse, the things concerning the seventieth week particularly (cf. vv. 9-14, 15-28).

(2) Second, to what does the "it" refer? In the Greek text there is ambiguity, and the subject may be *He*, as well as "it." If we take the subject to be neuter, then most likely the "it" would refer to the Kingdom of God (cf. Luke 21:31, "the kingdom of God"). If we take the subject to be masculine in gender, then the reference is to the King, and we would then render the clause, "know that He is near, even at the doors." The latter is the probable interpretation, since the expression "at the doors" suggests a person, rather than a thing (cf. Jas. 5:9). Further, the context, which speaks so strongly of the advent of a person, the Lord Jesus as the Messianic King, also supports this interpretation. The following passage lends added support as well (cf. v. 36).

To sum up, the Lord has then said that, when the events described in the preceding context begin to unfold, His coming is near at hand.

*Concerning the certainty and celerity of the advent* (24:34). This verse has been the subject of a great deal of discussion, and it is the basis of the opinion of some that Jesus was mistaken in His view of the advent. Does not this text say plainly that He expected the end within the lifetime of His contemporaries? If this is so, then we cannot say that Jesus was inerrant in His human nature. But, before we make up our minds, let us note

some of the other interpretations that have been offered of this verse.

(1) First, some have suggested that the "all these things" of verse thirty-four refers to the kingdom, and that Jesus was simply saying that the present generation would not pass away before the kingdom had come. The kingdom, according to this view, would not be the Messianic Kingdom, the future visible reign of the Messiah, but the spread of the influence of Christ over the world in the present age. That did begin during the lifetime of that generation. The view, however, demands a different view of "all these things" from that suggested by the context, for the kingdom of the context and Gospel of Matthew is a future and Messianic one, in which the returning Lord reigns visibly.

(2) Second, others have taken the expression "this generation" to refer to the Jewish race. The words, then, simply mean that the *Jewish people* shall not pass away until all these things find their fulfillment. Fundamental to this view is the claim that the expression, "this generation," may refer to the Jews as a nation, that is, it may be rendered, *this nation*. The interpretation does preserve our Lord from error, the eschatological nature of the promise, and its agreement with the history of the Jews. It founders, however, over the meaning of the word *genea* (AV, "generation"). This word occurs ten times in the Gospel of Matthew, and it never means *race* or *nation*. Its common meaning throughout the New Testament is *generation*, and in about thirty-eight occurrences never has the meaning of *race*, or *nation*, so far as I can tell. When Matthew wishes to speak of the idea of nation, he uses the word *genos*. Therefore, while it is very true that Israel as a nation has remained to the present day and will remain (cf. Jer. 31:35-37), there does not seem to be any convincing reason for us to think that our Lord referred to this here.

(3) Third, still others say that the Lord meant simply that the generation of His contemporaries shall not have died out until the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. shall have taken place. This view preserves the proper sense of the word *generation*, but it founders over the fact that in the preceding context the Lord's foreview of the future has spanned the centuries from His time to the time of the great tribulation. Further, the disciples had asked questions having to do with the second advent and the end of the age (cf. v. 3). Is it not reasonable to expect His answer to cover these points? Finally, in verse thirty-six, the following context, the second advent is in view. Thus, His words are to be understood as going far beyond the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

(4) Fourth, I am, therefore, inclined to think that His words are to be understood to mean that the generation of the Jews that sees the things mentioned in verses four through twenty-eight will not pass away until all of the program finds its consummation.

In other words, once the program of the last days, or the seventieth week, is set in motion by God, there shall follow a sudden and certain completion of it. According to this interpretation, the sense of the word *genea* as *generation* is preserved, and the proper force of the "all these things," as relating to the preceding context and the second advent, is also maintained.

There is, however, an objection of some significance that must be handled. In the use of the pronoun "you" (cf. vv. 33-34), does not our Lord limit the application to the generation standing before Him? Not necessarily. It is not uncommon for our Lord to use the personal pronoun, addressing the people before Him, to include not only them but others, who down through the years are members of the same group, or body. For example, in 23:39 the "you" there surely comprehends the members of Israel before Him at the moment and the members of Israel who shall greet Him at His second coming. In verse nine of chapter twenty-four the "you" comprehends the wider body of Christian disciples, as the words "hated of ALL NATIONS" indicates (cf. vv. 15, 23, 25).

We conclude, then, that the Lord prophesies here that the end, when it begins, shall have its consummation suddenly and certainly.

*Concerning the guaranty of the advent (24:35).* There follow words that guarantee the fulfillment of the prophetic program outlined in the preceding section. The opening words, "Heaven and earth shall pass away," probably look back to verse twenty-nine, where, as Plummer puts it, "the beginning of a break-up of the universe seems to be indicated." It is interesting to compare the statement of 5:18 with this one. There He said, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." The dissolution of the heaven and earth constitutes the conclusion of the age, but the Law is expected to abide throughout the whole time. The Law here includes not only the Mosaic system, but also the Messianic promises. In the passage in chapter twenty-four the Lord affirms the eventual passing away of the heaven and the earth, but His words shall outlive them and abide forever. Isaiah was right, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever" (cf. 40:8). We have a magnificent testimony to the power of His Word and the certainty of the fulfillment of all of it. The testimony could only be true of One who possessed full deity. Just imagine how ridiculous the words would sound upon the lips of anyone else. Cf. 1 Pet. 1:23.

### III THE QUALIFICATION REGARDING THE TIME OF THE ADVENT

There follows one of the most puzzling of our Lord's utterances, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels

of heaven, NOR THE SON, but the Father alone” (cf. v. 36, NASB). It is clear from the following verse that He is speaking of His second coming. He has outlined the circumstances of the event, but He has not given any intimation as to the time of it. He here reveals that He does not know the time of the advent, an amazing revelation in the light of the picture that has been given in this gospel of the Lord and His divine authority and power.

It will be noticed that the phrase, “nor the Son,” is not found in the Authorized Version. A number of the ancient manuscripts do not have the words here, but they are clearly genuine in the parallel passage in Mark 10:32. While they may have been added here to harmonize the two accounts, it is a little more likely that they were omitted in order to avoid the difficult theological question of the ignorance of Jesus of the time of the second coming. The decision is not an easy one, but we shall regard them as genuine here. There are several things to be said.

(1) First, it is a remarkable testimony to the frankness of the gospel writers. They faithfully recorded His words, even when they raised severe theological questions in their minds. Even His confession of ignorance is truthfully set down in Scripture. Incidentally, when we say He confessed ignorance regarding the future, we are not saying that He was mistaken regarding the future. The ignorance is the ignorance of self-limitation, not error.

(2) Second, but what shall we say about the confession? The problem posed, at first glance, seems to raise serious questions concerning the deity of Christ. Could the Son of God be ignorant of the future? To put the question theologically, *How can we reconcile the omniscience of the Second Person of the Trinity with the ignorance of Jesus?* The answer, of course, lies in the self-humbling of the Second Person (cf. Phil. 2:7).

That our Lord is not just an ordinary man is implied in His words, for when carefully studied they distinguish four planes of knowledge: men, angels, the Son, and the Father. He is above men and angels, as the order of words shows, and yet, the implication that He is an intermediate being below the Father is corrected by the baptismal formula of Matthew 28:19. The only satisfactory solution is that He, the Second Person, subjected Himself to *self-limitation for a time*, to fulfill the glorious will of God in our salvation. As Vincent Taylor has said, “. . . self-limitation is an essential form of the divine manifestation. God is God when He stoops no less than when He reigns.” The ignorance is a self-limitation in the area of His humanity, in the area of His human mind, just as thirst was a limitation in the area of His human body.

To sum up, then, the Lord Jesus in His human nature subjected Himself to limitation of knowledge concerning the time of the second advent. That knowledge remains with the Father alone.

In heaven even He lives in anticipation of a fresh revelation from the Father regarding the next step in the mediatorial program. The futility of human date-setting is demonstrated convincingly.

### *Conclusion*

In the introduction we referred to the common desire of men to hear something hopeful, and we pointed out that some words are hopeful to believers and dreadful to unbelievers. Such are the words of our Lord in the Olivet Discourse. They are words of infinite and comforting hope to the believer.

For the unbeliever, however, they are words of dire peril, for, if he remains in his state, all is lost. From this there is no escape, no, not even in pessimistic agnosticism. Bertrand Russell, writing for man, said, "There is darkness without, and when I die there will be darkness within. There is no splendour, no vastness anywhere; only triviality for a moment, and then nothing." How sadly wrong, as Mr. Russell knows, for the Word of the Son affirms, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the WRATH OF GOD ABIDETH UPON HIM" (John 3:36).

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## **Knowing Of Whom Thou Hast Learned**

Stanford Chambers — 1947

### *The Apostle Paul*

Come we now to another martyr. As apostle he taught with full authority, and ever put his converts in an attitude of expectancy and hope concerning the coming again of the Lord Jesus. The Thesalonians he "turned from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven... who delivereth us from the wrath to come." "Our citizenship," he wrote the Philippians, "is in heaven, whence also we wait for a Savior... who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." This teaching disallows our placing "the millennium" BETWEEN us and the coming of Christ, as post-millennialism does. As for "the day of the Lord," Paul taught that would come on the world as a thief, while they should be saying, "Peace and safety" (1 Thes. 5:2, 3).

Paul, though he does not MEASURE it in years for us (as John does), does point forward to the "age to come." (See Eph. 1:21; Heb. 6:5, Revised Version and margin). Note that not only in THIS age, but in "that which is to come," our Christ is to be "far above all rule, and authority, and power and dominion." "All things" are still "in the age to come," to be *subject to Him*. The anti-millennial view disallows any such age, while the post-millennial view has the Lord Jesus made *subject* immediately upon His coming. Clearly Paul was neither post-millennial nor a-millennial in his teaching. It is Paul who reminds us that

Jesus must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet (1 Cor. 15:25). And it is Paul who likewise tells us that that archenemy, "the man of sin," is to be in the zenith of his power with all the world worshipping Him, at the very time Jesus returns, "whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to naught by the manifestation of his coming" (2 Thes. 2:8). Here, then, is an enemy who is not destroyed *till* Jesus comes, and the man of sin is NOT THE LAST enemy to be destroyed. But he must reign until the LAST enemy is destroyed. The beast man of sin is destroyed upon the coming of the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11ff), and, with the false prophet, goes to the lake of fire. Satan, the inspirer of this beast, is handled next, and he goes to the bottomless pit for a thousand years (Paul's "age to come"), the while the nations are no longer being deceived by him; then after the thousand years comes his loosing; then his final doom in the lake of fire; then the white throne judgment; the doom of the wicked; the destruction of Hades and then the last enemy, DEATH. "Where are also the beast and false prophet" (Rev.20:10) looks back to 19:20 when they were cast into the lake of fire—a thousand years before Satan goes there, but THEY go there upon the appearing of the Lord Jesus: "whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to naught by the manifestation of His coming"(2 Thes. 2:8). So the coming of Jesus precedes the thousand years. That is to say, His coming is PRE-MILLENNIAL, not post-millennial. Paul establishes that.

#### *The Apostle Peter*

Another martyr also pre-millennial in his teaching. Concerning Christ he said, "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets" (Acts 3:21). See Lipscomb again. The times of restoration are inaugurated by the coming of the Lord Jesus from heaven. The times of restoration are NOT NOW. These are "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24), during which Jerusalem is trodden down. The mystery of iniquity continues to work, evil men and imposters wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, nation rises against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, iniquity abounds, the love of the many waxes cold, the apostasy comes on apace, the man of sin is to spring forth "according to the working of Satan (*not* bound but) with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish," power and signs and lying wonders, and with all a time NOT of restoration, but of apostasy and catastrophe. Peter shows that the times of restoration FOLLOW the coming of Jesus from heaven. This is clearly premillennial teaching. (Nor does he contradict it later as some interpret him.)

#### *The Apostle John*

John is given to see the catastrophe in which this age ends. He sees and foretells the sending of judgment after judgment (seals, trumpets, vials) upon a faithless and rebellious generation, until

the forces of Satan are broken and "the kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" (Rev. 11:15). This is seen coming to pass at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, he tells us, and THEN follows the reign of Christ. IT HAS NOT YET COME TO PASS. We wait for it. It is given John to tell us the LENGTH of this future age, and he is given a more elaborate vision of the day when the Son of man is revealed. When He reigns there must be *no rival king*, so the self-exalted prince is dethroned (Rev. 19:20; 2 Thes. 2:8). Satan is incarcerated, the thousand years' reign follows. John, of course, was premillennial. Really, the controversy is with this inspired writer. John simply must not be allowed to say what he means or mean what he says. Alas!

But it is said, "Revelation is a book of symbols." And so what? Did the Lord Jesus make use of the symbols to confuse His people or to illuminate His truth? When He calls Satan a serpent and a dragon, does He not REVEAL Satan? And when He calls the man of sin a beast does He not *reveal* his character? When he calls the great counterfeit religious system the "great harlot" and the "mother of harlots," does He not reveal her character? And get this point: the thing the symbol STANDS FOR is not something imaginary or visionary, but a *real* and *actual* something. Look for the Bible interpretation of the symbol. God's people CAN get the revelation (Matt. 13:16). His enemies *will miss* the truth and will therefore be unable to counterfeit without detection the fulfillment of things God has foretold. We should be glad.

Sequence of events foretold by John: The beast, with his deputy, "the false prophet," comes into his world-wide power. This is in chapter 13. This character meets his destruction upon the appearing of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords in the end of chapter 19 (brief account in ch. 17). This is the destruction foretold by Paul in 2 Thes. 2:8. It is also the destruction of all arrayed against the King of Kings (Rev. 19:19-21), even as Paul foretells in 2 Thes. 1:8. It is when "he shall show who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords" of which Paul writes in 1 Tim. 6:14, 15. The next event John gives us is the arrest and imprisonment of Satan. During his incarceration Christ reigns with those having part in "the first resurrection," *included* in which number are those martyred by the beast before his destruction. Then later comes the loosing of Satan, his deceiving of the nations again, then his destruction in "the lake of fire," into which the beast and the false prophet are cast alive a thousand years before. (Note, they are still there when Satan comes to the same doom, 20:10). Then comes the resurrection of the rest of the dead (20:12; note "the rest of the dead" of 20:5 and how they are distinguished from those of "the first resurrection"), the judgment and the doom of the lost; then the destruction of Hades and of "the last enemy," death. (Compare 1 Cor. 15:26 and context). Then come the "new heavens

and the new earth" with the ushering in of "the day of God," using Peter's term (2 Pet. 3:12), the goal of all goals. These things must come to pass that "God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28).

### *The Lord Jesus*

Of course the teaching of John, Paul, and Peter is the teaching of Jesus—"He that heareth you heareth me"—but let us note Jesus' own personal teaching. In His great prophecy on the mount He gives a panoramic view of the age *until* "the Son of man shall come in his glory." From the destruction of Jerusalem and onward the "Holy City" has indeed been trodden down of the Gentiles, even as He said, and this period of time He designates as in "the times of the Gentiles." The age ends in the terrible "time of trouble" spoken of by Daniel the prophet or "great tribulation" as Jesus calls it, "immediately after" which is His glorious appearing with His raptured saints (1 Thes. 4:17; Jude 14; Matt. 24:29, 30).

"But when the Son of man shall come in His glory... then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory." "Then" He begins dealing with the nations (not the dead, but the living—see quotation from L. F. Bittle), and the saints, who are to "judge the world," will be associated with Him, crowned and enthroned (2 Tim. 2:12; Jude 14; Rev. 3:21; 2:26). "Fear not, little flock, it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32). His prophetic survey of the present age leaves no room anywhere THEREIN for His reign of peace, "the millennium." It is "wars and rumors of wars" to the end. His reign of peace follows His taking His throne, as per Matt. 25:31. In this present time the King has ONLY HIS FAMILY as His kingdom, but "Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance" (Ps. 2:8). Hence Rev. 11:15.

## **NEWS AND NOTES**

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

Orla Boyer, missionary in Brazil for many years, and brother of Ethel Sevedge, passed away April 21st in Springfield, Missouri, and was buried in Lakeland, Florida. He had returned to the States in February of this year. —Harold Sevedge

The Louisville Fellowship Week may slip up on you. Mark your calendar for AUG. 7-11. You may find some names that are new to you on the program.

While you are marking your calendar, circle Oct. 11-13. Carl Ketcherside will be at Highland Church of Christ on those dates.

### **NEWS OF THE CAMPS**

Echo Valley seemed to have the right combination of campers and counselors the week of July 9th. The 6th, 7th, and 8th graders who made up that camp period left with a good concept of Bible camp.

We haven't heard much from the campsite that was given to Antioch Church, Frankfort, Ky., but the main building is about finished. No other facilities are available.

Family Week at Woodland had approximately eighty campers. A good time of fun and fellowship was enjoyed by all who were there. We

were especially glad to have Alex Wilson to bring us a message each evening. Special thanks go to the directors and the cooks, who helped to make this week a success.

**Rangeland Church, Louisville:** We are happy to welcome our new minister, Bro. Paul Kitzmiller. He and his wife, Virginia, and son, Derek, have joined us here. We are thankful to God for sending them our way!

With the coming of Bro. Kitzmiller, Bro. Boyd will be spending more time in the radio-evangelism work.

**Cramer and Hanover Church, Lexington:** This year was a "first" for Cramer in having a morning VBS. The attendance was encouraging, and

a large percentage of the children came on the bus. We know everyone involved (including our teen-agers who helped on the bus and helped with puppets) made a special effort to be with us and that the Lord has given a special blessing.

**Lagro, Ind.:** I really enjoy reading the magazine. It has cleared up questions in my mind which I believed to be important.

The article in the April issue by Bro. Carl Kitzmiller on baptism was very good. It was just the kind of article I was hoping to find to answer some of my questions.

Thank all of you men who devote your time to teaching us the scripture.  
—Mrs. Ralph Coan

## A Joy Letter From Saudi Arabia

Dear Christian friends,

Doug and I, with children, arrived in Dhahran May 13 and have been enjoying the time here. On May 22 I had to have emergency surgery, but we had been attending a Church of Christ gathering, so that group took over babysitting and feeding for two weeks. I am now able to get out again and just wanted to tell you that there are Christians the world over and the Christ-like love they showed us meant so much to us here as newcomers. There were 47 of us last Sunday—we have to meet at night because Sunday is a work day—the weekends are Thursday and Friday. This group is non-instrumental and we participate in the communion service each week at 7 p.m. which is 11 a.m. Sunday morning back in the "states," so we feel we are very close at that time to our loved ones back home. We received your bill (Word and Work) yesterday and hope you will continue to send the bundles to Locust Street. Also, add to that, please, the cost of sending one copy to us each month, as we enjoy any news of our loved ones so much. Also, the messages in the magazine will lift us, I am sure.

May God continue to bless you in this work, and do remember us in your prayers. Doug is in personnel work here for Aramco (Arabian-American Oil Company). We enjoy it all—sand, sun, and seeing new things and making new friends.

In Christ,  
Joyce Broyles