



THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

The official newspaper of The Church of God International

Vol. 28, No. 2

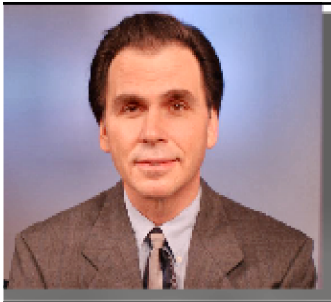
"Put on the whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:13)

Summer, 2007

A RENDEZVOUS WITH PROPHECY?

The stranger [foreigners] that is within thee [the nation] shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. He (foreign nations) shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him [you will be a debtor nation]; he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail. Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee:" (Deuteronomy 28:43-45)

by Bill Watson



Bill Watson

The United States of America, along with Britain and many of the former Commonwealth Nations, would do well to heed the "alarms" of the

prophets sent to Israel and Judah. History has proven there is an intimate connection with these "cultures." (To better understand this connection, request the CD series titled *The Biblical Origins of the British Commonwealth and United States of America*). The parallels of ascent and demise, leading ultimately to national destruction and captivity, are *astounding!* Patterns are being repeated. The dismantling of the British Empire and the current fragmenting of the United States of America's culture and declining international geopolitical influ-

ence are sad testaments to the confirmation of this fact.

It's no secret the "social norms" of the West, especially in North America, Great Britain, Australia, and throughout Europe, are changing. Modern *secularism* in combination with *moral relativism* has moved the standard. What used to be considered wrong is now seriously considered to be right. What was thought to be abnormal and/or deviant is now considered normal and/or acceptable. The world is a different place. "Pop culture" is the new guiding light, defining our social norms. This has become painfully obvious throughout all segments of our culture.

Sadly, due in large part to the present vacuum of leadership, the United States is losing its *super power* status and becoming increasingly seen as a trouble making, visionless *paper tiger*. A major contributing factor to this has been the shift from the world's biggest creditor nation to the world's largest current debtor nation. Keep in mind the present deficit exceeds a trillion dollars after adding the national debt with the current trade deficit. Present-

ly, multiple foreign nations are holding in their possession U.S. promissory investment notes exceeding 50% of our national debt, making these *foreign nations* the *majority owners* of the United States of America.

Unfortunately, this trend has not shown any signs of slowing down, let alone putting a stop to this kind of reckless "investment borrowing." As a matter of fact, the United States continues to finance its debt by attracting surplus money from foreign nations. Those nations then purchase investment promissory notes, essentially loaning the United States *their money* after an agreed interest rate is contracted. The U.S. government then spends those invested (borrowed) foreign revenues to pay interest on the loan (debt) and/or the purchase of additional goods and services the government requires.

Everything is fine and continues to work well, but only as long as the one borrowing (in this case

PROPHECY, CONTINUED on page 13

"WHY DON'T YOU KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH-DAY?"

A QUESTION FOR ALL BIBLE CHRISTIANS

The following essay appeared in the American edition of *The Clifton Tracts*, Volume 4, printed as early as 1854 by Roman Catholics, which asks the Protestant:
WHY DON'T YOU KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH-DAY?

I am going to propose a very plain and serious question, to which I would entreat all who profess to follow "the Bible and the Bible only" to give their most earnest attention. It is this: Why do you not keep holy the Sabbath-day?

The command of Almighty God stands clearly written in the Bible in these words: "Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt do any work" (Exod. xx. 8,9) And again, "Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord; whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death. Ye shall kindle no fire through out your habitations upon the Sabbath day" (Exod. xxxv. 2, 3). How strict and precise is God's commandment upon this head! No work whatever was to be done on the day which He had chosen to set apart for Himself and to make holy; He required of His people that they should not even light a fire upon that day. And accordingly, when the children of Israel "found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath-day," "the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp" (Numbers xv. 35). Such being God's command then, I ask you again, Why do you not obey it? Why do you not keep holy the Sabbath-day?

You will answer me, perhaps, that you *do* keep holy the Sabbath day; for that you abstain from all the worldly business and diligently go to church, and say your prayers, and read your Bible at home, every Sunday of your lives.

But *Sunday is not the Sabbath-day*. Sunday is the *first* day of the week; the Sabbath-day was the *seventh* day of the week. Almighty God did not give a commandment that men should keep holy *one day in seven*; but He named His own day, and said distinctly, "Thou shalt keep holy the *seventh* day;" and he assigned a reason for choosing this day rather than any other—a reason which belongs only to the **SABBATH, CONTINUED on page 14**

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Is It Sin to Eat Meat?

Some would have us think so. What does the Bible say?

by Mike Nolan



Mike Nolan

It may sound unusual to most of God's people, but a rising movement in our society today asserts **Almighty God did not design the human body with the capacity to assimilate animal products;** and some go so far as to tag the consumption of meat, or any animal product, as sinful. They also claim the consumption of animal products is the cause of most sickness. Space does not permit this article to address each issue raised by proponents of this philosophy. However, considering they are quick to invoke scripture to support their claims, I would like to address what I consider their most unconventional teaching, i.e., the consumption of animal products is sin.

Let us analyze the primary scripture from the book of Genesis cited by the "meat is evil" crowd as proof text: "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat [food]" (Genesis 1:29).

No problem here, as plant life was indeed designed by our Creator to provide food. Consider the next verse, which they never seem to mention:

"And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, **I have given every green herb for meat [food]: and it was so**" (Genesis 1:30).

The above scriptures seem to imply that God provided sustenance, in the beginning, through plant life exclusively, not only for humans, but for animals as well.

What is the implication? If God intended originally that animals were to consume only plant life, then apparently something has changed since the Garden of Eden and the fall of man. As we all know, some animals are herbivores, while a great many in the animal kingdom are carnivores. If food requirements of animals have changed, maybe human nutritional requirements changed as well. We can see evidence of this apparent transformation in man after his removal from the Garden and following the Flood.

Notice: "Every moving thing that liveth [animals] shall be meat [food] for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things" (Genesis 9:3). If Genesis 1:29 tells us, as is claimed, that man is vegetarian, then does Genesis 9:3 give us the green light to eat meat? Could it be that God gave incomplete instructions in Genesis 1:29, or might it have something to do with the fact we are not in the Garden of Eden anymore? Whatever the reason, Genesis 9:3 is apparently a general statement about the consumption of animals and does not include *all* animals, because we read in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 that certain animals are acceptable for food while others are not.

What we find in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 are dietary instructions from God Himself regarding physical health, not ceremonial or ritualistic practices exclusive to Jews, as some claim.

Notice Leviticus 11:44: "For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy. This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth: To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between **the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.**"

Question: If it was God's intention that man not consume animal products—if our bodies were not designed by God to process anything of animal origin—then why these dietary instructions regarding meat? Why not simply tell His people, Thou shall not eat flesh—period?

We also find Abraham in Genesis 18 serving animal products to the Lord and accompanying angels. The Lord visited Abraham, in a form he was most acquainted with, for the purpose of completing the faith of Sarah, and of communing with Abraham regarding the destruction of Sodom.

Notice: "And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. And he took **butter, and milk, and the calf...and they did eat**" (Genesis 18:7, 8).

This does not imply that sustenance is necessary for spirit beings. What we see here is a typical act representing unity between God and Abraham. The giving and receiving of a meal was an act of sacred friendship. This would have been a great opportunity for God, who allegedly designed our bodies such that we cannot process animal products, to set Abraham straight and explain to him the evils of animal consumption.

John the Baptist was also apparently ignorant of God's meatless design, as his typical diet consisted of locusts and wild honey (Mark 1:6). A locust is an animal—classified as meat, and among the list of the clean variety found in Leviticus 11. Honey is also an animal product. Moreover, this is not the locust bean tree, as some would like to claim because they cannot accept the truth. A cursory study of the Greek word *akris*, translated "locusts" makes clear that what John consumed was the locust, *particularly that species which especially infests oriental countries, stripping fields and trees* (Thayer definition).

Our Savior observed the Passover and consumed lamb every year. The instruction was "they shall eat it..." (Exodus 12: 8). The Gospels are clear about our Savior's inclination toward food. "he [Jesus] said unto them, Have ye here any

meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them" (Luke 24:41-43). Who would know better than our Creator concerning the nutritional requirements of the human body?

There is more evidence from Scripture to be cited, but I believe my position is clear. Consuming animal products is not a sin.

Why do those who believe to the contrary and look to the Bible for support, ignore these plain scriptures? I like to call it "selective perception," or alluding to and expounding only those scriptures that *seem* to support their pet belief, and ignoring those scriptures that clash with their personal dogma.

Diet, as well as other factors, does contribute to the problem of sickness in America. Consuming animal products alone is not the cause. I also realize, considering the processes that some meat and fowl undergo before they are sold (hormones, antibiotics, etc.), that we must exercise care in selecting meat. However, this is another issue entirely. God's way is, and has always been, balance.

When it pertains to diet, we as God's people must be responsible. To uphold that the consumption of animal products is wrong, or as some claim, evil, is categorically irresponsible and incongruous with Scripture. □

Are Unclean Meats Clean Today?

Question: If certain animals were identified as unclean before the flood (Genesis 7:2,8); if they were still counted as unclean when Peter rejected them in his vision (Acts 10:14); if they are yet called unclean in Revelation 18:2, where Scripture speaks of "unclean" birds; and if Isaiah declares that all who are eating swine and the abomination at the time of the Second Coming of Christ will be consumed (Isaiah 66:15-17); how can we feel that they are now fit to eat? How and when did they become clean?

Answer: They didn't! "Think *not* that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am *not* come to destroy, but to fulfil" (Matthew 5:17).

"And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail" (Luke 16:17). □

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS P.O. BOX 2525, TYLER TX 75710

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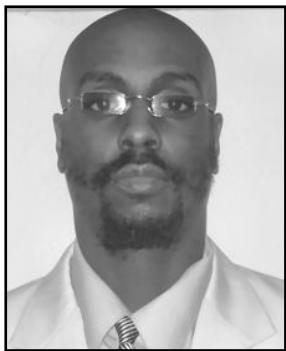
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The Battle For Our Minds

“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7). What do you think—and why?

by Zion Hezekiah



Zion Hezekiah
Toronto, Canada

In this modern era of technology, often referred to as the “Information Age,” it is virtually impossible not to be affected somehow by what we read, view, or listen to in our daily lives. But how are we allowing these revolutionary mediums to influence our beliefs and behaviors?

Some people accept the information they read in newspapers and watch on television as the gospel truth. Is such faith in our mass media harmless? Most people would agree that well over 50 percent of what we receive through the media is negative. Why is it that most people would be more interested in a news story about a sports athlete who murdered his wife or took illegal drugs than about a sports athlete who donated his time and money generously to assist the needy? The second of the two is undoubtedly more touching. But the question is, which story would generate a *higher profit* for these media outlets? And why? Why are we so attracted to controversy? How has the media manipulated our minds into taking a vast interest in sin? Is it possible that Satan, as intelligent and resourceful as he is, could very well be the “hidden CEO” of Hollywood and the leader of the mass media at large?

Twenty years ago, the media’s influence was far less impelling on us than it is today. The blasphemous innuendos exposed by our modern day media are much more blatant today than in times past. What was once deemed a massive shock to viewers is much more than accepted today. In fact, it’s the norm. In 1956, Elvis Presley struck a huge pandemonium over his swiveling hips as he performed his hit songs on national television. Because of the sexual connotation of his dance moves, the Ed Sullivan Show refused to

film him from the waist down. Compared to what we see in today’s music industry, where many would agree that MTV’s music videos geared toward the teens is nothing less than soft porn, things have definitely taken a twist for the worse.

Satan, the author of confusion, has been fanatically unyielding in these last days, as his inevitable demise draws closer. He is using the media as a subversive tool to influence society by drawing the worship away from the true and living God, unto himself. Satan is preying on the impressionable minds of our youth through the media by manipulating our children into the adoration and idolization of false gods. These false gods are in the form of music entertainers, Hollywood actors, sports athletes, and anyone who falls under this professed echelon of “upper class,” living the lifestyle of the rich and famous.

Marilyn Manson once said, “I want to be remembered as the person who brought an end to Christianity.” Recording artist Curtis “50 Cent” Jackson lives by and advocates the motto “get rich or die trying.” And he is highly esteemed by our youth for surviving a gun attack wherein he was shot nine times. The word of God teaches us not to imitate evil (3 John 1:11), but these are just a couple of examples of the people whom our children admire and aspire to be like.

Satan has confounded the minds of these Hollywood celebrities, allowing them to feel somewhat invincible and secure in their material wealth. Sadly, the entire media is being deceived by Satan, and subsequently the masses are being deceived by the media. This vicious cycle will continue and will only get worse until Jesus Christ returns to earth to establish His kingdom.

It is nearly impossible to watch a hit Hollywood movie without the evil presence of fornication, (1 Thessalonians 4:3) drugs and alcohol abuse, (Titus 2:11–12) violence, (Psalm 11:5) and profanity (2 Timothy 2:15–16). And what’s even worse is the fact that it has become virtually an insignia in Hollywood movies to take the Lord’s name in vain (Exodus 20:7). Even Hollywood writers/directors with good moral

values feel forced to add these iniquities into their motion pictures, because otherwise they would be nearly impossible to market.

Is it any wonder that Satan is the “director behind the director” when in 2005, a movie about two homosexual cowboys became a box office success and was ranked in the top five for movie of the year? Or what about the huge success of “The Passion of the Christ” in which Mel Gibson had the audacity to produce a visual depiction of the tremendous ridicule, sufferings, and ultimate death of our Lord Jesus? And now new to the big screen is the highly acclaimed film, “The DaVinci Code.” This motion picture will undoubtedly assist Satan in his quest of mass deception when many will be sold into believing the blasphemous theory that our Lord Jesus Christ never died, but was married and had children.

Once Satan, through the course of the media, succeeds in changing the way that we think, immediately our behaviors are altered and we become one of his subjects.

Rejecting the media’s propaganda and saying “no” to sin is by no means a simple task. The first step is to thoroughly acknowledge and comprehend the deception that we are all facing. From there, we are halfway to the solution.

Through Jesus Christ and the power of His Holy Spirit, we have the ability to pick sense out of nonsense and to pick truth out of falsehood (Matthew 7:15–18).

We must pay closer attention to what is influencing our beliefs and the beliefs of our young ones (Mark 13:5). Instead of putting our trust in these media-created idols (Psalm 20:7), let us put our trust in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us put on the whole armour of God that we will be able to stand firm against the deceit of the Devil (Ephesians 6:11–13).

Media means “medium,” which is an intermediate. The media (led by Satan) and all its immorality is having an adverse effect on our relationship with God. The only influential intermediate that should be between us and God the Father is His Son Jesus Christ. □

Book Review: The Marketing of Evil

Through creeping incrementalism, Americans have come to tolerate, embrace, and even champion many things that would have horrified their parents’ generation—from easy divorce and unrestricted abortion on demand to extreme body piercing and teaching homosexuality to grade-schoolers.

The Marketing of Evil reveals how much of what Americans once almost universally abhorred has been packaged, perfumed, gift-wrapped, and sold to them as though it were progressive social enlightenment.

David Kupelian’s fast-paced 256-page book documents what many have perceived and suspected for a long time, that *terminology makes a difference*.

For instance, new terminology is used to persuade the general public to accept the abnormal as normal: child molestation has become “man-boy love” and crushing baby’s skulls and sucking out their brains has been relabeled “choice” and a “constitutional right.” Additionally, the Bible has become a document considered by some as a nest of “hate speeches” that should be banned.

The methods of making evil to appear as good utilizes skillfully crafted techniques of manipulation via desensitization, jamming, and finally, conversion. These methods are clearly brought out in the book. Once you see and are aware of these strategies, they

nearly jump out at you in today’s morally declining society.

Highly skilled marketers, playing on our deeply felt national values of fairness, generosity, and tolerance, have persuaded us to embrace as enlightened and noble that which all previous generations since America’s founding regarded as grossly self-destructive—sin and evil.

In many respects, this book picks up where *People of the Lie* and Vance Packard’s book, *The Hidden Persuaders*, left off. *The Marketing of Evil* shows how the products of social evil, i.e., abortion rights, gay rights, etc., have been skillfully marketed and promoted for the purpose of normalizing these abnormal behaviors and social morays.

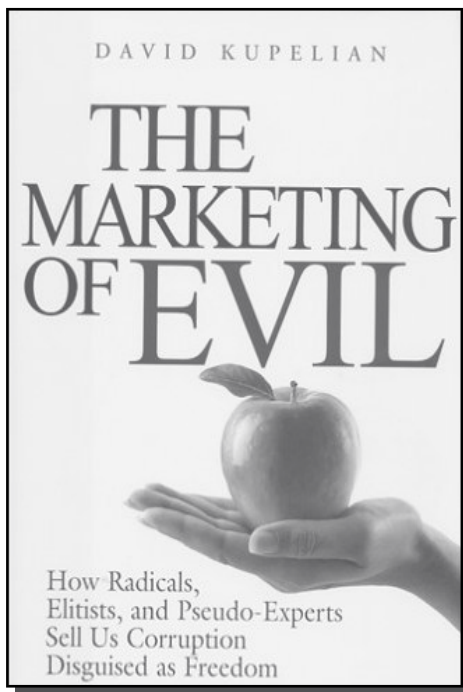
Likewise, most of us mistakenly believe many social issues were spontaneous, grassroots uprisings of neglected or persecuted minorities wanting to breathe free. Few people realize America was actually “sold” on these issues by means of carefully phased plans laid out by professional Harvard-trained marketers.

In *The Marketing of Evil* you will learn:

- Why is anti-Americanism becoming commonplace—among Americans?
- What’s behind the sexual revolution—in middle school?
- Why are so many parents afraid to let their children watch TV?
- Why is our legal system criminalizing public prayer?
- Why do half of all American marriages fall apart—including Christian marriages?
- How is it possible that near-term babies are legally aborted—despite public disapproval?
- Why is it increasingly hard to know if experts are telling us the truth?

No quarter is given in this riveting, insightful exploration of how lies, both subtle and outrageous, are packaged and sold as “truth.”

If you have wondered how America has been transformed so rapidly from a strong Judeo-Christian culture into a divided, confused, and contentious society, increasingly hostile to its own core values, you must read *The Marketing of Evil*. □



Church News

Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread Report



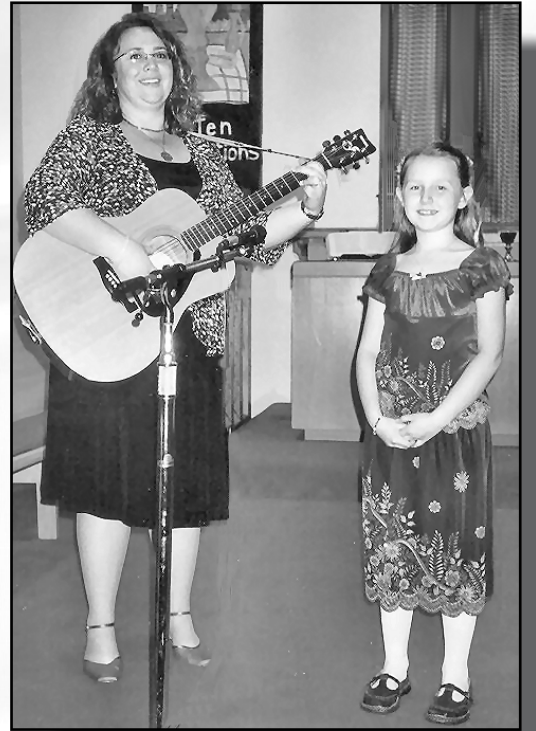
Suzanne Loomis and Max Davis provided special music on the Last Day.

Our holyday celebration started March 24, 2007, the Sabbath before Passover, with the baptisms of Julie Hilebrand of St. Joe, Missouri, and her mother, Shirley Clark, from Wathena, Kansas. Frank Marang and Max Davis officiated.

The two ministers who provided holyday messages were Max Davis of Wichita, Kansas, and Frank Marang of Coffeyville, Kansas.

Suzanne Loomis and her daughter Krista provided special music on the First Day of Unleavened Bread (April 3). Suzanne Loomis and Max Davis also provided special music on the Last Day (April 9). □

Submitted by Margie Marang



Suzanne Loomis and daughter Krista performed on the First Day.



Max Davis and Frank Marang



Frank Marang (left) and Max Davis (right) baptized Julie Hilebrand of St. Joe, Missouri, and her mother, Shirley Clark of Wathena, Kansas, on March 24.



Here are some (but not all) who attended Passover and holyday services in Wichita this year.

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Church News

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The Spring Holydays in Morehead, KY

The Passover is such an important experience to a Christian. Without Christ’s sacrifice, we would be nothing. Our congregation heard many inspirational messages as we observed the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Bob Tackett explained to us Judas’ involvement with the two different plots of land and the thirty pieces of silver. It was so wonderful seeing Bob well enough to deliver a message.

James Pollitte walked us through Christ’s activities between the Resurrection and His Ascension. On the Sabbath we listened to Mike James speak on “Being Complete,” or getting sin out of our lives. The last day of Unleavened Bread, Ferrell Vincent cautioned us to “Remember Our Covenant.” We also stuffed ourselves with lots of good food. Thank you to all the good cooks in our congregation, excluding this writer.

Writing about Passover this year is impossible without making it personal. Although I have studied and listened to tapes for years, I have only been able to worship with a congregation for about four years. It wasn’t until I participated in the actual observance of the Passover season that I was able to fully understand and appreciate its relevance to a Christian’s life.

The previous three years I was concerned with being in the right place at the right time and doing what was expected of me—and cleaning the leavening out of the house.

This year, however, there were some recent events and old memories that caused me to take a closer look at myself. I found myself doing things that were totally out of character for me. I had “examined” myself before in a way that now seems superficial. But taking a closer look, I found a fault—a sin, if you will—that I was unaware of, and it has been causing me problems for years. The acknowledgement of that sin helped me to correct mistakes, to make changes in my life, and to now continue the effort to undo a sinful habit. Habits take time to develop, and it will take time and diligence to shove it completely out of my life.

All of this brings many scriptures to mind: “And it shall be, when he is guilty in any of these matters, that he shall confess that he has sinned in that thing” (Leviticus 5:5). “Speak to the children of Israel: When a man or woman commits any sin that men commit in unfaithfulness against the LORD, and that person is guilty, then he shall confess the sin which he has committed, he shall make restitution for his trespass in full” (Numbers 5:6-7). Don’t hold your breath. This isn’t an Oprah moment. I’m not about to confess my sin to all. God knows that I know my sin.

“...Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself...” (John 5:19). “I can of mine own self do nothing...” (John 5:30). How do I know that I am getting in sync with God? From the time of my confession to Him, every sermon I’ve heard and everything I’ve read either provided encouragement or further instruction. And, as a bonus, I lost all craving for any type of leavening during the Feast. Maybe my attention was on the true meaning of the season.

Each year our congregation, our family, like all others, comes together to observe the Passover and Feast as Christ did. “But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body” (I Corinthians 11:28-29). We humble ourselves by washing each other’s feet, examining ourselves, and confessing our shortcomings to God, realizing that without His help we are useless. We eat bread and drink wine to commemorate His sacrifice, and study to be better children of God. We have been blessed, thus far, to live in a country where all people, whatever our social, financial, or political standing, can participate. We have come to accept the fact that being rich doesn’t keep us from hardship and illness any more than a higher education, without the Holy Spirit, helps us understand. All of us in the Church of God know it was His sacrifice that we remember and accept that makes our lives the best they can be.

Submitted by Alice Edwards Lauria
Edited by James Pollitte

Springfield, MO Keeps Pentecost

God’s holyday reminders are always a blessing to His children—a time when brethren of like mind can gather together to celebrate the promises God our Father has made to His children.

This year in Springfield we enjoyed the Pentecost holyday with a split sermon provided by Mr. Drew De Jarnette and Mr. David Beckerdite. Interestingly enough, both speakers spoke concerning the Voice of God, which, in fact, was the title of Drew’s portion of the split sermon. Mr. Beckerdite’s sermon, “Knowing the Voice of God,” dealt specifically with the similarities and differences between Israel of old and spiritual Israel of today. David sang “My Sheep Know My Voice” for special music. Mr. Alex De Jarnette directed the song service, while young Nathan De Jarnette operated the sound equipment.

There were 22 people in attendance and an outstanding potluck meal that followed the service.

With Pentecost, the spring holydays are drawn to a close, and we enter the summer time of preparation for the upcoming fall holyday season. May we all listen intently to our Father’s voice throughout the coming months.

What’s going on in your local church area?
Combined services? Public Bible Studies? Potlucks? Church activities? Celebrations? Memorials? Visiting ministers? Birth or death announcements? Plans for getting the *Armor of God* program on a free Public Access television station in your area? Let us know, and perhaps we will publish it under “Church News.” We’d love to hear from you!

The editor

Open Church Policy

The Church of God International is an open church. We have many people attending who are new in the faith. Some will not always keep each of God’s laws as they should, and some will not believe everything we teach. We pray that they may be strengthened through the services we render and the examples we set as they come to a closer walk with their God. We request that you be neither judgmental nor base your standard for obedience on what you see your brother do. Christ is our standard, not weak and sinful men. Always remember that you will be judged for what you do, not what others do. Your job is to pray for them, set the right example, and please the Father in all that you do. (Source: the Auburndale / Lakeland, FL local church website).

Local C.G.I. Websites

Home Office, Tyler, TX.....	http://www.cgi.org
Canada.....	http://www.cgicanada.org
Phillipines.....	http://www.cgiphils.org
Montgomery, AL Birmingham, AL..	http://www.hisvoice.org
Auburndale, FL.....	http://www.geocities.com/cgiauburndale
Waterloo, IA.....	http://cvcgi.ourprofile.org
Gaithersburg, MD.....	http://www.cgimaryland.org
Raleigh, NC, Greensboro, NC.....	http://www.cgiraleigh.org
Hickory, NC.....	http://www.hickorycgi.org/
Columbus, OH.....	http://www.cgicolumbus.org
Salt Lake City UT.....	http://www.cgi-utah.org/
Toronto, Ontario, Canada.....	http://www.cgitoronto.org/
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Church News



A Wedding in Springfield



Wedding bells chimed after Sabbath services on May 12, 2007. Almost the entire congregation in Springfield, Missouri gathered to celebrate the wedding of John Parker and April Lynn. With a congregation of only 25, a wedding is a rarity, so it is a very special occasion when we get to gather together to celebrate a union blessed by God. John and April are a young couple in their mid-20s.

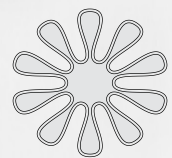


Congratulations to John and April Parker!

The wedding was officiated by the Springfield congregation's pastor, Mr. Ken Register, and the wedding party consisted of the bride and groom and Charlie and Pam Shuster, the parents of the groom.

Assisting the pastor with the scripture readings was our deacon, David Beckerdite.

Everyone enjoyed the fun and celebration that followed the ceremony. Congratulations, John and April Parker! May your years be numbered as the stars! □



Beckerdite Takes First Place in Fierce Chili Cook-Off!

Last February was Springfield, Missouri's CGI annual chili cook-off. There were eight entries, ranging from white chicken chili to traditional chili. The chili cook-off is a long-time tradition of the Springfield congregation, and each year the competition gets fierce. "Practice" chili starts hitting potlucks year round, as members of the congregation fine tune their skills to try to take first place. The reigning champion is growing his own peppers, which will most definitely find their way into his chili so he can keep his title. Every year, the winners are given prizes such as kitchen knives, aprons, and hot mitts to help them prepare for the following year's battle.

The cook-off was held after services in place of the monthly potluck. As always, there was great fellowship to go along with the great chili. After everyone had tried the eight different chili entries, they voted for their two favorites. This way, after voting for yourself you can vote for your second favorite. After they tallied all the votes, first place went to David Beckerdite, second place was a tie between John Parker and Drew and Joanna De Jarnette, third was Charlie Shuster, and fourth was Judy Foulks. Everyone had a great time, and all are looking forward to next year's competition. □



Home—A Safe Haven!

by Kitty Bumgardner



Kitty Bumgardner
Knoxville, TN

Children do as they are taught. They are born with empty brains, if you will. This void is filled with information given to them by their parents' example until they are old enough to learn by words; then they learn by words and example. The right example is extremely important throughout their formative years and beyond.

In a loving family environment, the father is the leader, the head, as God calls him in Ephesians 5:23: "For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is the head of the church..." The mother is the husband's helpmate as he leads the family. The wife who is determined to be her husband's helpmate in his career and in his leadership role is setting the right example. The children see this example from day one.

A wife who is a keeper at home as instructed in Titus 2:5, ("To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed"), provides a safe haven or nest for her children to grow, to learn, and to prepare to face the outside world. Just as a child is protected in the mother's body until birth, the children in an ideal home are protected in the home until adulthood. This plan as designed by God does not degrade a woman, nor does it place her in a role of second-class citizen. This role is one of the most important in the universe. She is nourishing and nurturing future members of God's Kingdom. This is not done only for six years, after which the children are turned over to the school system. They will need a formal education,

but they need that safe haven after school. In this environment, they learn how to have a relationship with God, their future wife or husband, and their neighbors; and they will learn how to submit to authority.

The submission to authority will have been taught by their father's example of submission to Jesus Christ, and their mother's example of submission to her husband, their father. Children growing up without this wonderful example by parents will be rebellious toward their parents, toward society, and toward their God. They will not have been taught the fundamental truth of how to relate to others.

When they are not taught these fundamental truths from birth, we see the results in our society. The way to have a happy life is to obey God. The way to have a happy home is to obey God. The way to have obedient children is to obey God in raising them. Set an example of obedience and teach them to obey. "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord" (Colossians 3:20). If the child sees the parents obeying God to the best of their ability, he will desire to obey God as well as his parents and other authorities.

One might say at this point, Well, what about love? Don't they need a loving environment in which to grow? And of course the answer is yes. We see Jesus Christ speaking in John 14:21: "He who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." If the father and mother are obedient to God's commands, there will be love in the home. Love from the Father in heaven, to Jesus Christ, to the father of the home, to the mother, and to the children. Obedience to God is showing love. God's commandments are love. Keeping His commandments shows love to everyone. □

Where Are You In Your Walk With God?

by June Rush



June Rush
Indianapolis, IN

This is a question each of us as Christians should be asking ourselves every day of our lives. Where do we stand right now in accepting God's promises for us? What are the things we need to do in order to please the Lord?

Are you a fence sitter, a busybody, always watching and finding fault and judging others, or are you planted firmly on the ground and growing and overcoming and becoming more like Christ Jesus everyday?

Conversion does not happen in the baptismal pool; there are no magic potions in it. We are buried in baptism and raised a new creature in Christ, but if we allow ourselves to stagnate, not growing and bearing fruit, we will die spiritually.

In Acts 2:38, we are admonished to "...Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Notice, it doesn't say, "you shall receive the gift of eternal life." Baptism and repentance are only the first steps in our spiritual growth and walk with God.

Are we still drinking milk in our Christian walk, or have we grown enough to start eating the meat of God's word, and able to digest it and put it to work in our lives?

We are living in very evil times, and if we let our guard down for a second, Satan will be there to prey on us, and plant wrong and sinful thoughts in our minds. His goal is to destroy us as Christians. So keep your spiritual guard up and your armor around you through prayer, Bible study, and meditation of God's Word. Don't only drink and eat of it all the time, but digest it; because spiritual food produces spiritual growth, just as physical food produces physical growth. Make God and His Word the focal point of your life. Make it a habit to pray immediately on arising each morning, thanking Him for giving you another day of life and all of the other blessings you have received from Him. Do it before the phone starts ringing or the kids get out of bed to go to school. Matthew 6:33 says, "Seek you first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you." What a promise, and another reason to praise Him for all He does for us. I have found in my 35 years or so as a Christian that if I get out of bed early and go to a quiet place and talk to the Lord, my day goes much smoother than it would otherwise.

Many have been taught at an early age to pray for God's Kingdom to come, but do we really comprehend what Matthew 24:14 means? "And the gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." Are we doing our part, no matter how minute it may seem, to see that this passage is fulfilled by our witnessing to the world, or are we sitting on the fence, waiting for someone else to do the job? It is not only our responsibility to pray for the world to learn about God, but to make certain that they do, by the example we set for them.

It says in Matthew 24:12-13, "Because of the increase in wickedness, the love of many will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved."

Let's learn to keep our armor around us all the time, and rely on the promises of God; entering a new stage of conversion and growth day by day by studying His Word, putting it into practice, praying without ceasing, meditating, and witnessing to others about Him and His promises to save us from the evil one. When we fall down, let's learn to pick ourselves up and keep on keeping on, walking in newness of life, never quitting.

If we put these six points into practice it will help us to grow and become more mature in Christ:

1. **PRAYER:** Seek God first every day.
2. **BIBLE STUDY:** Make it a habit that will never cease.
3. **MEDITATION:** This can be done anywhere, at any time throughout the day or night.
4. **LOVE:** 1 Corinthians 13:8,13 "Love never fails, but where there are prophecies, they will cease, where there are tongues, they will be stilled, where there is knowledge, it will pass away...And now, these three remain, faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love."
5. **FAITH:** Hebrews 11:1,2 "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see, this is what the ancients were commended for." (We can't see God or hear His voice, but we know He is there because of faith).
6. **HOLINESS:** If we put into practice all of the above, we become holy in our lifestyles, and all of these things produce spiritual growth, so God will fulfill His promises to us.

In Psalms 32:1-2 we read, "Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered, whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit." Also in Psalms 31:1-4, "In you, O Lord, I have taken refuge, let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness, turn your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue, be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me, since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of Your name, lead me and guide me, free me from the trap that is set before me, for you are my refuge." Romans 6:20-23 says, "When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness, what benefit did you reap at that time from things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death; but now that you have been set free from sin and become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to Holiness and the result is eternal life, for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is Eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Where are you in your walk? Are you arming yourself against Satan, through the Rock, which is Jesus Christ? In 2 Peter 3:18 we read, "But grow in Grace and Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Him be power and glory both now and forever. Amen!" God keeps His promises if we do our part. □

What Your Prayers Tell About You

*Your prayers are leaving an indelible record of your wants, attitudes, and character!
What do your prayers say about you? How should you pray to be heard?
What is the listening aspect of prayer? The answers may surprise you!*

by Lloyd W. Cary



Lloyd W. Cary

PRAYER, without doubt, is the most common of all religious practices, especially in times of emergency. General Eisenhower once observed, “There are no atheists in fox holes.” Many have a “just in case” God whom they only visit in emergencies.

How important is prayer to you? Did you forget to talk to God today? Can anyone really be “too busy” to pray, and actually ignore God? If you are too busy to pray, you are too busy! Your silence may be saying in effect, “God is not interested,” “I’m not interested,” or even, “I don’t need Him.”

Remember: prayers cannot be answered if they are not prayed.

Scripture tells us we are to “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). But why pray? And how? What does prayer do for you? Even more significantly, what do your prayers tell *God* about you? Let’s see how important prayer is—to God.

A Comparison

If you own a computer, you know there are programs that can trace your every keystroke, every document, every site you visit, everything you do. You leave an invisible telltale “trail.”

When you visit the vaults of heaven in prayer, you also leave a “trail”—an indelible record of your wants, attitudes, character, and makeup.

Prayer is when the true heart speaks out. When you pray to God in the way He directs, He listens. He appraises. He remembers. And, some might add, “He is taking notes.” By listening intently to your prayers day after day, week after week, year after year, God knows exactly what you are thinking about, what your interests are, what your attitudes are, who or what concerns you most, and what your desires and regrets are. He knows how you feel about your brothers and sisters in the faith, about the ministry, and about people in general. He knows if you are zealous or indifferent. He knows what you think about Him. He knows whether your prayers are genuine and heartfelt, or mere hollow Pharisaic rhetoric in an attempt to impress Him. He is not interested in “showy prayer”—prayer that is more for the ears of others than for the ears of God. He’s not interested in hearing what someone else wrote in a “prayer book,” nor in monotonous memorized rosary-type prayers (Matthew 6:7). He wants a *conversational* prayer—from the heart—not an orchestrated attempt to wear Him down to get what you want. From this data—from what you have done and prayed in the past—He can accurately project what you are likely to do in the future. In other words, your prayers “tell” on you.

Through your prayers, your heavenly Father becomes acquainted with the *real* you—they mirror who and what you really are. What do your prayers reveal about you? What impressions do your prayers make on your heavenly Father? The Lord of the entire universe is especially watchful over those in His own household. He knows our very thoughts. “For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings” (Proverbs 5:21). See also Proverbs 5:21, 15:3, Jeremiah 17:10, 23:24, and Hebrews 4:13.

Real prayer is not a ritual, but heart-to-heart communication with God; a sharing of our innermost fears, wants, needs, and desires. If you would have God hear you when you pray, you must hear Him when He speaks. Sometimes you just enjoy each other’s presence in a parent/child relationship. He is always there when His children talk to Him in humility and sincerity. Prayer is a very private, intimate, personal, and loving moment with God. Prayer is telling God what worries us, what upsets us, what concerns us. It’s telling God when we’re grateful for His help, when we need His guidance, when we want His forgiveness, when we’ve been stupid and fearful and anxious. And when we’ve messed everything up. Prayer is the little child going to the father and spilling it all out.

Since our prayers reveal what is in our hearts and minds, they surely weigh in on how we are being judged. “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God” (1 Peter 4:17). Take up your Bible and review Jesus’ heart-to-heart prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane to see how He prayed (John 17). According to Hebrews 5:7–8, during the days of Jesus’ life on earth, He offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the One who could save Him from death, and He was heard because of His reverent submission.

Your prayers are a demonstration of your faith. They are, in effect, a “DNA printout” of your spirit—a barometer of your faith. Your manner of prayer shows God whether you wholeheartedly desire the things you ask for, or if what you say is a mere recital of words. He learns if you are desirous enough of the things you ask of Him to be persistent, or if you are quickly defeated and give up. He knows

by your prayers if you recognize Him as your strong tower of strength when confronted with trials (Psalm 61:3; Proverbs 18:10) or if you are a fair-weather Christian. Yes, your prayers leave telltale “breadcrumbs” of your soul! They tell on you.

Prayer Protocol

Not only the content of your prayers, but also the manner—your etiquette—by which you conduct yourself before His heavenly throne reveals much about you. Consider: if you rush through your prayers or offer up short repetitious prayers time after time, does not this tell on you? If you are presumptuous, yawn, fall asleep, or rush through a few repetitive words, you are indeed “sending a message.” Would you conduct yourself that way when standing before an earthly prince, king or president? Should we not at least show our Sovereign Father the respect we would give an earthly ruler?

Do you truly *love* God? Then consider this: we do not rush away from those we love, do we? No, we linger long and come back often. So it should be in our prayers!

Our short, ritualized, three-minute prayers tell God if we are really concerned for the household of God, what we think of the ministry, and the work entrusted to us. We should give the Eternal God *prime* time—not “leftover” time. Rushing through or reciting memorized prayers actually degrades them. A good rule of thumb would be that we should pray for others as we would have others pray for us. We need to face the stark *reality* of what an awesome *privilege* it is to appear before the throne of the very Ruler of the universe! Do not abuse it. Paying attention to your approach in prayer will speak well of you.

God usually receives little, or at best, short-lived, thanks, even for His greatest gifts. Be thankful! He deserves far more praise than any of us could ever give Him. Our thanks to God should always precede and follow our requests. “Cold” prayers seldom have any warm answers.

There are certain prayers God will *not* hear (Psalm 66:18; Isaiah 41:17; Jeremiah 7:16; Malachi 2:17). God may turn His ear from unrepentant sinners, prattling prayers, or preaching prayers, but never from repentant, believing prayers.

If our prayers are to ascend to God as sweet-smelling incense (Revelation 8:4), we must pray in faith (Hebrews 11:6), with composure, forethought, and attention to detail—not shout in gibberish or lose control. Give your prayer some advance thought. Ask yourself, “Why am I appearing before the Eternal on this occasion?” If necessary, jot down some thoughts you wish to address in your prayer meeting with Almighty God.

It is documented that the family who prays together stays together. If you do not already have family prayer, just *do* it—break down the barriers! When a family prays together and is in touch with God, tensions are eased and there is more harmony in the home. Biblical prayer enables us to overcome our differences, promotes friendship and peace, and causes people to forget their petty complaints, jealousies, and envies as we acquire a “God’s-eye view” of ourselves and others.

The Listening Phase of Prayer

Prayer is not all talking. Prayer is listening as well. Sometimes you speak; sometimes you listen. Listening, too, is an essential part of prayer. If you were to appear before an earthly king, would you ramble on and do all the talking? Would you not listen to what the magistrate had to say? Most certainly! Likewise, when you appear before God’s throne in the third heaven, take time to listen. How does one do this?

One listens to God by letting the words of the Bible pass through his mind and heart. The Bible is the inspired Word of God put into the language of men. By listening to the Holy Scriptures, the words of the prophets, the writings of the apostles, and the wisdom of Jesus Christ, all flow through the mind, inspiring, enabling you to put on the very mind of Christ. *Read the Book!* Let God’s thoughts well up in your mind (1 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Timothy 1:7). In this way, one can spend much time in prayer with God and yet utter few words. When we listen, we learn (Psalm 4:4; 46:10). When we listen to the words of the Scriptures, we show ourselves learners of God—not just vain babblers (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). When you enter into your prayer closet, anticipate that you are going to have an ongoing conversation with your heavenly Father. Ask yourself—in the context of your prayers—what would He say to you? How would He counsel you? If you have absorbed God’s Word, the Bible, you will know.

Intercessory Prayer

When we pray for ourselves we do a good thing, but when we pray on behalf of someone else we do something even better. At no other time are we more like Christ, our Intercessor, than when we are praying for others! God is looking for love and growth; praying for others promotes both. Our intercessory prayers for God’s household show that we are interested in our congregations, their activities, and welfare. When we pray for others, we show ourselves to be outgoing, caring, concerned, and mature.

True prayer is a spiritual encounter, an energizing force that will help transform your attitude toward those for whom you pray. We cannot hate those for whom we

**KEEP IN MIND THAT WHEN
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pray *sincerely*. Genuine prayer for others changes *us*—our outlook, our attitude! Jesus said we are to love even our enemies (Luke 6:35). Praying for those who have hurt, offended, or despised us, speaks well of us in the eyes of God.

“If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a *liar*: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also” (1 John 4:20–21). Prayer is a power that binds. Prayer is a spiritual lubricant that smoothes out troublesome human relationships. Prayer goes where no man can go; does what no man can accomplish. Prayer opens doors, hinders evil, touches the sick, and convicts the sinner. Prayer works! Our need is for more people to PRAY! But there are conditions!

Our prayers for others must be humble and sincere—unlike the self-righteous Pharisee who boasted that he prayed, fasted, and gave tithes of all (Luke 18:11–12). We show by our petitions that we want all men to come to a perfect knowledge of the truth, and be saved. We, like God, want none to be lost (Ezekiel 33:11).

Jesus said: “By *this* shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have *love* one to another” (John 13:35). God is watching, listening, scrutinizing, and learning about you. Your prayers reveal whether you love this way or not.

What else do your prayers tell about you?

Honest Prayer—Why Some Prayers Are Not Answered

Let’s be honest. We all know the right words to say; we know what God wants to hear. But when you ask

God to give you the love of righteousness, forgiveness for your enemies, and fruits of the spirit, do you really *mean* it? Do you mean it enough to *obey* what God says (Luke 6:46)? Or do our actions belie our words? Most of us are aware of a certain amount of deceit in our natures (Jeremiah 17:9–10). How often do we say—or even pray—things we do not really mean? Sometimes we pray for things that we do not honestly want or should not have. How often do we try to manipulate God? Do not play “head games” with the Almighty. You will not win. The scripture reminds us, “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination [detestable] to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight” (Proverbs 15:8). “He that



turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination” (Proverbs 28:9).

A great many prayers are not answered because we are not willing to forgive someone. Other prayers go unanswered because they are asked amiss. Some may pray for legitimate things, but all week long their actions attest that their prayer is a mere recital of words. External acts of worship, though according to biblical prescription, are repulsive to God when the heart of the worshiper is amiss (cf. Isaiah 1:121–15; Amos 5:21; Malachi 1:11–14; Hebrews 11:4,6). Without faith it is impossible to please Him (Hebrews 11:6). Some prayers are spoken in doubt and without conviction. They are not completely honest prayers. James says: “For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways” (James 1:7–8). David prayed, “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me” (Psalms 51:10). David surrendered. He wanted to change—*God’s* way. His prayer was answered.

Your prayers are an illustration of your lifestyle, thoughts, plans, and attitudes. Again, we ask, what do your prayers tell about you?

Instruction in Prayer

Many religions in the world teach a variety of ways to approach God. The Bible reveals otherwise (Ephesians 4:5; John 10:810; Jude 3). In Jesus’ time it was customary for famous rabbis to compose special prayers for their followers. When one of Jesus’ disciples requested, “Lord, teach us to pray,” Jesus taught them an outline of categories to pray about, sometimes called “the Lord’s Prayer.” Some would insist that we should repeat this outline over and over. We should note, however, that He gave this outline immediately *after* warning them against saying the same things over and over repetitiously. It is evident that Jesus did not intend the model prayer to be repeated by rote from the differences in His expressions in the two recorded instances in which He taught his disciples to pray (Matthew 6:9–15; Luke 11:2–4). The *ideas* Jesus expressed on those occasions were similar, but his words were *not* the same. Jesus’ own prayers were spontaneous, not memorized. Notice His heartfelt prayer in the garden of Gethsemane (John 17). Prayer is simply one-on-one conversation with God, opening the heart as to a friend.

The idea of praying as directed by Jesus in Matthew 6 and Luke 11 may at first seem daunting to those who may have been taught to offer memorized prayers, prayers to “saints,” or to employ various “religious” items or artifacts, yet the key

to answered prayer is coming to know God—His plan, purposes, and personality—and coming to willingly and eagerly obey Him in every facet of our lives (1 John 3:22). The more we learn about our heavenly Father, the more we are moved to pray to Him from the heart. Jesus said in another place that, “God is Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship *in spirit* and *in truth*”

(John 4:24, NKJV). Be sure that your prayers are truly in harmony with the Bible, including the instructions of Jesus Christ. In this way you can be certain your prayers will have God’s approval.

To help you in your personal prayer life, be sure to request our special free booklets, *Who, What Is God?* and *How To Be More Effective In Your Prayer Life*.

**SINCE OUR PRAYERS REVEAL
WHAT IS IN OUR HEARTS
AND MINDS, THEY SURELY
WEIGH IN ON HOW WE ARE
BEING JUDGED. WHAT DO
YOUR PRAYERS TELL GOD
ABOUT YOU?**

Prayer Is No Substitute For Effort

Prayer is not the only requirement in worshipping God. Many spend countless hours asking God to give them this and give them that, but they never put their lives in order. How is your personal and family life? Does it reflect Jesus Christ? Do others see Jesus in you? Contention and discord quench the power of prayer. How we live is as important as repeating daily prayers. If we would pray right, we must also live right. God is observing what you do and how others perceive you, as well as the words you utter.

Some are like the old deacon who prayed, “Use me, O Lord, in Thy work—especially in an advisory capacity!”

Do we expect God to jump at our beck and call every time we pray? Unfortunately, many do. Some see prayer only as a way of *getting* things. Prayer is more than asking God to run errands for us. He is not our servant; we are His (Isaiah 64:8). Many pray only when there is a crisis. The “name it and claim it” and the “health and wealth” philosophies are selfish and loathsome to God. We must educate ourselves to the fact that true prayer is not a substitute for diligent effort. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might” (Ecclesiastes 9:10). *We must act in harmony with our prayers!*

God’s guidance is a supplement to, not a substitute for, our own thinking and doing. God has given us various talents, abilities, and opportunities, and He expects us to use them wisely (Matthew 25:15). Just as an earthly father expects his son to demonstrate initiative, using his mind to search out and to make wise decisions, so too, our heavenly Father desires effort from us. When we do our part, God may then do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. We should pray as though everything depends on God, and work as if everything depends on us. Always look for ways to *act* on the faith you display in your prayers. When God sees we are not to be turned aside by planning, hard work, and perseverance, our prayer will be answered when and how He sees fit if it is in accord with His will. If we do so, our prayers will be a pleasure to Him.

Above All Things, We Need to Pray!

It is not the purpose of this article to indict the reader nor make him feel “guilty” of falling short in his or her prayer life—we *all* do, but hopefully, we are working on it—but to make him aware of the necessity and importance of prayer—*real* prayer, as God intends it. Above all things, we need to pray! We need to pray in times of adversity, lest we become faithless and unbelieving. We should pray in “the good times,” lest we become proud or boastful. We are to pray in times of peril, lest we become fainthearted and doubting. We need to pray in times of security, lest we become over-confident. As sinners, we need to pray to a merciful God for forgiveness. Parents, pray that God may crown your home with love, peace, grace, and mercy. Children, pray for the salvation of your parents. Christians, pray for God’s Kingdom to come quickly. Pray that God will enable you to help fulfill the great commission Christ has given us. We all need to pray for the outpouring of God’s Spirit upon a willful, evil, unrepentant world. Christians, saints of God, pray that the dew of heaven may fall upon earth’s dry thirsty ground, and that righteousness may cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Above all, be humble and appreciative of the privilege of prayer. Prayer, meditation, and Bible study are your most powerful tools to help you grow, change, and overcome. Remember, your prayers do not lie. They tell the truth about you.

Keep in mind that when you pray, you are painting a vivid picture of yourself before God as surely as an artist would paint a self-portrait. Every prayer is a brushstroke of the portrayal of the real you. Show respect in your conduct; pray with sincerity and conviction. Be honest. Be willing to do your part. Be willing to change when you are in error, knowing that conversion amounts to behavior modification, not a mere assent of words. Be assured that “whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight” (1 John 3:22). Prayer moves the hand that moves the world. Faithful biblical prayer according to His will never goes unanswered.

In the End of Days

In summary—in the end of days—when it is your time to stand before the judgment seat of God Almighty, if all your collective prayers were collected and bound in a book—what would your prayers tell about you? □

A True History According to Holy Scripture

Chapter 6

A CHRONOLOGICAL MYSTERY SOLVED!

The Importance of Understanding the Life of the Patriarch Jacob

by Benjamin R. Chapman



One of the most important and intriguing truths found in your Bible is that all we find in the Scriptures is the *real truth*, but often God doesn't make the truth *so easy to find*! Sometimes we must put on a detective's hat and play the role of a Sherlock Holmes to solve a mystery in certain aspects of understanding, especially on our

Ben Chapman studies into ancient history and chronological facts. Of course, the real answer is the power of the Holy Spirit that reveals these solutions!

A most thought-provoking footnote is given in the NIV Bible under Genesis 11:27-25:11 and is well worth including in this chapter:

"With God's calling of Abram out of the post-Babel peoples, the story of God's ways with humankind shifts focus from universal history to the history of God's relationship with a particular person and people. Here begins the history of his saving work in which human sin is not only judged (the flood) or restrained (Babel) but forgiven (through atonement) and overcome (through the purifying of human hearts). Throughout the rest of the Scripture the unfolding of this history remains the golden thread and central theme. Its final outcome is made sure through Jesus Christ, 'the son of Abraham' (Luke 3:33; see also Matthew 1:1-17; Galatians 3:16), which is the core message of the NT."

To begin this chapter, we need to revisit briefly the life of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the father of Jacob, who grew into the great nation of Israel.

Isaac 2108 A.M.

The Scriptures state that Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born, and the twins Esau and Jacob were born when Isaac was sixty years old. This brings us down to one of the big "mysteries" in the lives of the patriarchs. When was Jacob married to the two daughters of Laban, Leah and Rachel, and when was Joseph born? Up until now, important birth and marriage data has been supplied in your Bible, but the Scriptures do not state the marriage date of Jacob directly. However, God has not left us in the dark about such important dates. The clues are there. It is up to our own careful study to determine the answers. And Joseph's life is important to understand, because it helps us identify the chronology of the first three dynasties of the Egyptian culture.

Esau & Jacob 2168 A.M.

So, let us "play detective" again. To find the dating of Jacob's marriage, we must start all the way down to the absolute 2298 A.M. date of Jacob's journey down to Egypt to live in the land of Goshen found in Genesis 47:7-9, and then carefully work backward to his year of marriage.

Jacob before Pharaoh 2198 A.M.

"And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old are thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."

Continuing this line of reasoning, we read in Genesis 45:6, after Joseph revealed himself to his brothers and requested they go home and bring Jacob down to him, the following:

"For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in which there shall neither be earing nor harvest."

Editor's note: This is the sixth installment of a series by Benjamin R. Chapman on the history of the world according to Biblical data. Mr. Chapman has completed several chapters and plans to eventually publish the entire series in a single volume. Until the volume is completed and made available, we plan to run segments of the work serially in *The International News*.

There had been the seven years of plenty after Joseph had been appointed second-in-command under Pharaoh when he was thirty years of age (Genesis 41:46), and now two years of famine; so Joseph's age was now thirty-nine (30 + 7 + 2). Subtracting the thirty-nine years of Joseph from the 130 of Jacob, we come to the conclusion that Jacob had been 91 when Joseph was born to Rachel. Now the question becomes, how many years previous to Joseph's birth had Jacob married the two daughters of Laban? That's simple. Jacob had to work seven years for Rachel, then after Laban's trickery of substituting Leah for Rachel on the wedding night, Laban bargained with Jacob that if he first completed the marriage week with Leah, he could have Rachel to wife too, if he agreed to work another seven years. Rachel's womb was closed for the first six years after their marriage—the majority of the time Jacob gave his additional seven years of servitude to Laban. In the seventh year Rachel became pregnant with Joseph. Finally, we read in Genesis 30:25-26:

Joseph 2259 A.M.

"And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country. Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee [these fourteen years], and let me go; for thou knowest my service which I have done thee."

With the birth of Joseph seven years after the marriage, Jacob had fulfilled his obligation to Laban and was ready to return home. But as we know, Laban bargained with Jacob again for yet another six years for which Jacob would receive some of the livestock from Laban. This twenty years of service to Laban is confirmed in Genesis 31:38, 41,

"This *twenty years* have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten ... Thus have I been *twenty years* in thy house; I served thee *fourteen years* for thy two daughters, and *six years* for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times."

We have these facts now, better than just an educated guess:

Esau/Jacob 2168 A.M.

Esau and Jacob are born to Isaac and Rebekah.

The patriarch Jacob had an interesting life. He had his faults too, but he grew in love and respect for the Eternal God. First, we can read in Genesis 25 of Esau selling his birthright to his brother Jacob. Bullinger, in his *Companion Bible*, estimates that the two brothers were about 24 when this action took place. The Bible does not reveal the answer, and besides, it is not really important at what age this sale took place.

Then, by trickery, Jacob got the blessings from his father Isaac as explained in Genesis 27. Esau was angry! This led to Jacob fleeing from his home to Padan-aram to look for a wife from the clan of Laban. See Genesis 27:41-45:

"And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob. And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him,

Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran, And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away; Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him: then I will send, and fetch thee from thence: why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?"

Rebekah was quite concerned about Jacob's choice of wife, because her son Esau had made her quite weary with his choices of wives from the daughters of Heth. She told Isaac her worries. He responded by telling Jacob to leave home in Genesis 28:5-7:

"And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padan-aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah who was Jacob's and Esau's mother. When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; And Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram;"

In the land to the east, Jacob found Rachel and fell in love with her! This is the Bible's example of "love at first sight!" Genesis 29:9-12:

"And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them. And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept. And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother [actually *her father's nephew*], and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father."

Jacob was quick to strike up a deal with Laban for his daughter Rachel. He was willing to begin a seven year servitude for her to be his wife. Read Genesis 29:16-20:

"And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and name of the younger was Rachel. Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured. And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter. And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her."

We will see that these A.M. dates for Jacob's life are very accurate in this chapter. The amazing fact is that Jacob was well along in years when he began his service!

Laban 2245 A.M.

Jacob is seventy-seven when he begins working for Laban seven years for Rachel's hand in marriage.

Marriage 2252 A.M.

Jacob is eighty-four when he marries Leah, then completes her marriage week, after which he is given Rachel for a wife, too. But he must work another seven years to complete the deal. Laban had fooled Jacob by substituting Leah for Rachel, and he demanded another seven years from Jacob for Rachel. Laban knew what kind of man Jacob was and how it would profit Laban so much to have him as his chief shepherd!

Joseph 2259 A.M.

Jacob is now ninety-one. After working for Laban another seven years, Jacob completes the contract for Rachel. During these years of marriage, Rachel has been barren while Leah and the two handmaidens have produced eleven children, ten sons and one daughter. Rachel

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finally bears a son, Joseph, and Jacob wishes to return home. Genesis 30:25–26:

“And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto my own place, and to my country. Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee [fourteen years], and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have done thee.”

Jacob was ready to leave for home, but was persuaded to work six more years for Laban. However, this time it was for some of his cattle. Genesis 30:27–32:

“And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it.

And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me. For it was little which thou hast before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the Lord hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also? And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock. I will pass through all thy flock to day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and of such shall be my hire.”

Home! 2265 A.M.

After working for Laban another six years, Joseph is now six years old, Jacob is now ninety-seven, and he finally leaves Laban to return home.

The commentaries, especially Bullinger’s *Companion Bible*, Appendix 50, generally agree with these ages of service for Jacob.

Of course, all this information is very helpful in correlating Biblical chronology with Egyptian chronology. This will be covered in another chapter.

When Periods Are Undefined

None of Jacob’s sons’ dates of birth are given in the Bible, especially Levi and his line down to Moses, and Judah with his line down to David; so how can we determine when the Exodus occurred? The answer: God has given us a fixed number of years from the covenant of circumcision to the Exodus, thus bridging the gap when dates as found in Genesis 5 and 11 are not given. Exodus 12:40–41 explains this “bridge” as being 430 years. We’ll discuss this in another chapter also.

Bullinger (*Companion Bible*, Appendix 50) speculates the following:

- One year after Jacob’s marriage: Reuben born.
- Two years after: Simeon born.
- Three years after: Levi and Dan born.

- Four years after: Judah and Naphtali born.
- Five years after: Gad born.
- Six years after: Asher and Issachar born.
- Seven years after: Zebulun and Dinah born (twins?) and Joseph born.

You be the judge! Except for the date of Joseph’s birth, the other children’s birth dates are not particularly significant. We read in Genesis 29:31–35: “And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated [loved less in comparison to Rachel], he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren. And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben [Heb. “*See a son*”]; for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me. And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Because the LORD hath heard that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this

chel. Genesis 30:1–13: “And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die. And Jacob’s anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in God’s stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb: And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went in unto her. And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son. And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name Dan [Heb. “*Judging*”]. And Bilhah Rachel’s maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son. And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali [Heb.

“*My wrestling*”]. When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife. And Zilpah Leah’s maid bare Jacob a son. And Leah said, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad [Heb. “*A troop or company*”]. And Zilpah Leah’s maid bare Jacob a second son. And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher [Heb. “*Happy*”].”

After hiring Jacob’s love with her son Reuben’s mandrakes, Leah conceived again. See Genesis 30:17–24: “And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son. And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name Issachar [Heb. “*A hire*”]. And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son. And Leah said, God hath endued me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun [Heb. “*Dwelling*”]. And afterwards she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah [Heb. “*Judgment*”].”

After being barren for six years of their marriage, Rachel finally became pregnant, and in her seventh year of marriage she had her own first son. Read Gen. 30:22–24: “And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb. And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach: And she called his name Joseph [Heb “*Adding*”]; and said, The LORD shall add to me another son.”

Thus, after seven years of marriage, Jacob now had eleven sons and one daughter! Quite a big family. And

Benjamin was yet to be added to Rachel (who died in childbirth), giving Jacob twelve sons, one daughter, and a very large family! His daughter, Dinah, was raped by Shechem, the son of Hamor, of the Hivite tribe, rescued by her two brothers Simeon and Levi, who slew all the males in Hamor’s city, and returned her to Jacob. She may have died childless according to the listing in Genesis 46 of the Israelites who moved down to Gosh-

Integrated Chronology of the Patriarchs

A.M.				
	<u>Abraham</u>			
2083	75 years old to Canaan*			
		Birth of		
2108	100	<u>Isaac</u> *		
2148	140	Age 40	Isaac married*	
			Birth of	
			Esau and Jacob*	
2168	160	60	<u>Jacob</u> *	
2183	175	75	15 years old	
	Abraham’s death*			
2208		100	40 Esau married*	
2245		137	77 Jacob to Padam-Aram	
2259		151	91	Birth of <u>Joseph</u>
2265		157	97 Jacob’s return to Canaan	6 years old
2276		168	108	17 Joseph to Egypt*
2288		180 Isaac’s death*	120	29
2289			121	30 Joseph enters Pharaoh’s service
2296				37 Begin 7 yrs. Drought
2298			130 Jacob to Egypt*	39
2303				End 7 yr. drought
2315			147 Jacob’s death*	56
2369				110 Joseph’s death*

Note: The ages marked with (*) are expressly given.
Chart taken from *Integrated Chronology of the Patriarchs, NIV Bible*.

The mysteries of Jacob’s age of marriage and of Joseph’s birth date have been solved!
Small Biblical clues can lead to big results!

son also: and she called his name Simeon [Heb. “*Hearing*”]. And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have born him three sons: therefore was his name called Levi [Hebrew, “*Joined*”]. And she conceived again, and bare a son: and she said, Now will I praise the LORD: therefore she called his name Judah [Hebrew “*Praise*”]; and left bearing.”

Now enters the two handmaidens of Leah and Ra-

A Letter from Polycrates

by Horane Smith



Horane Smith
Toronto, Canada

Controversy was brewing again, not a bit unusual in the second century, since the departure of the highly respected and last living apostle, “Saint John.”

It was near the close of the second century in Ephesus, Asia Minor, an area where great men of God such as the apostles Paul and John, had trod the dusty and sometimes muddy roads to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and His coming Kingdom.

In the first century, Paul had written a letter to the church at Ephesus, admonishing the brethren there, “Stand therefore having your loins girth about with truth...” (Ephesians 6:14). But now, those stalwarts of the faith were sleeping in their graves, and that very truth was about to be tested.

As these pillars of the church passed on, more followed suit, striving to adhere to the “faith once delivered to the saints.” One such faithful adherent in the second century was Polycrates, who presided over the Church of God at Ephesus. He came from a family of eight Christian bishops, all firm believers in the truths taught by the apostles. ¹They were passed down from the apostle John to another great student and Christian martyr, Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who had died a martyr in Ephesus, for resisting the change from Passover to Easter.

In Rome, the controversy was far from settled. Bishop Victor wanted a consensus on a proper date to celebrate Easter, rather than the Paschal Feast known as Passover. For all the parishes of Asia remained faithful to the older tradition, heralding that the fourteenth day of the moon, on which day the Jews were commanded to sacrifice the lamb, should be observed as the feast of the Savior’s Passover. ² Victor of Rome was pressuring them to abandon this observance.

However, to their credit, the bishops of Asia, led by Polycrates, stood their ground and were not about to compromise on this “truth.” Polycrates was adamant that “we ought to obey God rather than man.” It was time to write a letter to Pope Victor.

“We observe the exact day; neither adding, nor taking away,” was the first line of the letter, a reminder to the Pope that he had no doubts about the time of Passover. Polycrates went on:

“For in Asia also, the great lights have fallen asleep, which shall rise again on the day of the Lord’s coming, when he shall come with glory from heaven and shall seek out all the saints,” the letter continued.

Without a doubt, these great men who were not in heaven, but sleeping in their graves, Polycrates went on to name some of them. “...Philip, one of the twelve apostles

who fell asleep at Hierapolis...John, who was both a witness and a teacher and who reclined upon the bosom of the Lord... fell asleep at Ephesus. Polycarp, in Smyrna, who was a bishop and a martyr, and Thraseas, a bishop and martyr from Eumenia. Why need I mention the bishop and martyr Sagaris, who fell asleep in Laodicea, or the blessed Papirius, or Melito, the Eunuch, who lived altogether in the Holy Spirit, and whom lies in Sardis, awaiting the episcopate from heaven when he shall rise from the dead.”

Polycrates bolstered his position about retaining the Passover by naming these martyrs, knowing personally at least one of them, Polycarp, who had “endeavored to keep the unity of the Spirit.”

“All these observed the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the gospel, deviating in no way respect, but following the rule of faith. And I also, Polycrates, the least of you all, do according to the tradition of my relatives, some of whom I have closely followed. For seven of my relatives were bishops: I am the eighth. And my relatives always observed the day when people put away the leaven. I therefore, brethren, who have lived 65 years in the Lord, and have met with brethren throughout the world, and have gone through every Holy Scripture, am not affrighted by terrifying words. For those greater than I have said ‘we ought to obey God rather than man.’ I could mention the bishops whom I summoned at your desire, whose names, should I write them, could constitute a great multitude. And they, beholding my littleness, gave their consent to the letter, knowing that I did not bear my gray hairs in vain, but had always governed my life by the Lord Jesus.” ³

Despite his arguments, Polycrates and the bishops who supported him were ex-communicated from the church by Roman Bishop Victor. However, Victor reversed his decision later on, after several bishops, including Irenaeus, intervened.

It’s uncertain what happened after Polycrates’ reinstatement. Sadly though, despite his bold attempts to remain faithful to God, the date for a man-made holy day, known as Easter, was changed and instituted shortly afterwards.

Today, the majority of the traditional Christian world observes Easter, but there are still small groups of people who celebrate the Passover or Lord’s Supper, on the *same date* that the apostles of God, as well as Polycrates and Polycarp fought so bravely to keep. They held on to their beliefs and for all of them when facing death, martyrdom was the worthy option. To God’s glory, Polycrates’ letter to Bishop Victor was NOT written in vain. □

¹ Wikipedia

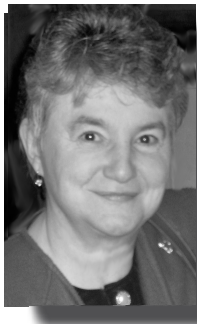
² Eusebius, Church History, Book V, Chapter 23

³ Early Christian Writings

Get Ready, Get Set, Go!

Be thinking of the Feast now!

by Gail Cary



Gail Cary
Toledo, OH

Before we know it, the Feast of Tabernacles will be upon us—the most exciting days of the whole year for those of us in God’s church! Why not plan now to make the most of it? I’m sure we’ve all experienced the “coulda, shoulda” syndrome—I “*coulda*” done that for someone; I “*shoulda*” brought that with me/left it at home.

What I’m talking about is making a list—*early*—not only of what we want to pack, but what we want to be thinking about. We all have different situations, so I’m not suggesting that you *pack* early (although I tend to do that myself, much to the amusement of my friends). But just getting yourself organized mentally and writing things down on paper can make a big difference in having a calm state of mind!

I’ve made it a practice to save a few “Feast lists” until our needs changed and it was time to throw them out and start over again. The items you pack in your suitcase will vary over time, but certain tasks stay the same. Bills need to be paid so they won’t come due while you’re gone; mail has to be stopped; pets have to be cared for, etc. If you write these things down well ahead of time, you won’t be anxiously wondering if you’ve forgotten any of these chores while doing your last-minute packing.

We know that the physical shouldn’t overshadow the spiritual, so why not take some time to meditate and make a list of things we want to improve on in the way of pleasing Christ more in our personal lives? What resolutions ought we to make? In contrast to “New Years,” the Feast is a great time to make a fresh start! What can we do to bless someone else in a practical and tangible way? Our brothers and sisters need us, and we need them! How about a note, a phone call, or a small gift for someone who won’t be able to make it this year?

And more than any other time of year, let’s not forget to praise our Father in prayer *constantly*, asking Him to help us make the most of every minute, storing up spiritual riches against the times ahead. We have been so greatly blessed to “ride upon the high places of the earth” (see Isaiah 58:13,14) and be able to keep God’s Feasts in these last days!

So, get ready—get set—go to the Feast! □

HISTORY, CONTINUED from page 11

en. But it is unclear. In any case, she is not considered as part of the twelve tribes of Israel.

More details are given in Genesis 46:15: “These be the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padan-aram, with his daughter Dinah: All the souls of his sons and his daughters were thirty and three”; Verse 18: “These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob, even sixteen souls”; Verse 22: “These are the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob: all the souls were fourteen”; and Verse 25: “These are the sons of Bilhah, which Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and she bare these unto Jacob: all the souls were seven.”

In Genesis 46:26–27, we have two summary verses that show the rapid growth in Israel’s family, invited by Pharaoh to live in the land of Goshen. “All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob’s sons wives. All the souls were threescore and six; And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten.”

The story of this remarkable patriarch Jacob would be incomplete without recounting a most interesting event he had on his return to his homeland and reunion with his estranged brother Esau. At the ford Jabbok, he sent his family ahead of him but remained behind for the night. Jacob encountered God, and wrestled with Him! Read the story in Genesis 32:24–30:

“And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou does ask after my name: And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.”

Apparently, he limped on his thigh the rest of his life.

Jacob dreaded meeting his brother Esau because he did not know how Esau would react. But the encounter turned out to be very joyous! In Genesis 33:4 we read: “And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.” □

PROPHECY, CONTINUED from page 1

the U.S.A.) can obtain enough “new revenue” to continue to finance its current debt and pay for the needed goods and services necessary for the government’s obligations. When and/or if the needed revenue is not obtained, or the lenders (foreign nations) want to “cash out their notes” and take their currency elsewhere, a major economic downturn, or in the worst case, collapse, would be inevitable. God’s Word reminds us, “the borrower is servant to the lender” (Proverbs 22:7). Or as was mentioned earlier, “...he [foreign nations] shall lend to you [Israel], and you shall not lend to him: he (foreign nations) shall be the head and you [Israel] shall be the tail” (Deuteronomy:43–45).

In the meantime, on the international level, the balance of power is beginning to change. The United States is most affected by being marginalized through the global paradigm of “political correctness” that has emerged from the United Nations.

This last remaining superpower is faced with a severe dilemma. On the one hand, the global community of nations is contending with a real and legitimate threat to international security from fascist Islamic Jihadists, which requires prodigious amounts of assets, revenue, and manpower to defend the world against this danger. Yet, on the other hand, trying to be all things to everyone is *no longer affordable* since the domestic infrastructure “at home” is ageing and in dire need of repair and updating.

A stunning example of this is illustrated by the fact and the sad set of circumstances concerning the city of New Orleans. After the overwhelming disaster of Hurricane Katrina, much of it still remains in ruin, while remaining exposed to the jeopardy of having the same disaster repeated. And sadly, while New Orleans lingers in this devastation, Middle Eastern nations surge ahead, modernizing their national assets with *western dollars the United States has borrowed* from Middle Eastern, Southeast Asian, and Chinese lenders. This unfortunate set of circumstances has entrapped the United States in a vicious financial/economic cycle that has resulted in sacrificing its wealth and causing it to over-extend its strength. Consequently, its ability to lead and maintain the economic and military “*balance of power*” for the global community has been severely weakened and continues to decline. These modern day “Israelitish/ Christian cultures” are indeed backsliding.

Notice what the prophet Hosea announced to *ancient Israel* during the time of its decline and dissolution from its state of affluence. “For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer: now the Lord will feed them as a lamb in a large place. Ephraim is joined to idols: [very similar to the present state of materialistic/secularist Western culture today] let him alone. [The trends cannot be turned.] Their drink is sour: they have committed whoredom continually: her rulers with shame do love, give ye. The wind hath bound her up in her wings, and they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices” (Hosea 4:16-19).

Before Hosea and approximately twenty years prior to the first Assyrian siege against the northern kingdom of Israel, a Jewish prophet from Judah named Amos came warning his fellow Israelites of God’s impending judgment. “Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken. Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph” (Amos 5:14-15).

His clarion message was *not well received* because of the present material wealth, luxury, and ease this Israelite society was enjoying at the time (much like the cultures of the U.S., Great Britain, and other commonwealth and European nations). Unquestionably, their basking in luxury in their summer houses and mansions of ivory was a distraction from the menacing destruction that was approaching. Notice what Amos said on behalf of God to his northern Israelite brothers. “For they know not to do right, saith the Lord, who store up violence and robbery in their palaces. Therefore thus saith the Lord God; an adversary there shall be even round about the land; and he shall bring down thy strength from thee, and thy palaces shall be spoiled. Thus saith the Lord; as the

shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria in the corner of a bed, and in Damascus in a couch [illustrative of the lap of luxury]. Hear ye, and testify in the house of Jacob, saith the Lord God, the God of hosts, That in the day that I shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him I will also visit the altars of Bethel: and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground [God intended to destroy the non-Israelitish religious buildings and locations]. And I will smite the winter house with the summer house; and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, saith the Lord” (Amos 3:10–15).

Today the Israelitish/Christian cultures of the West are repeating the same destructive cycles as was done some 2700 years ago. The abandonment of the commandments, statutes, and judgments of God are serving only to promote the agenda of distancing the minds and hearts of the people from the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Additionally, Jesus the Christ, the seed by which all mankind is to be saved today, is viewed with more skepticism than ever before. The Judeo/Christian values and principles He represented and stood for are often dismissed as hateful and bigoted. Movements to expunge the God of the Bible and Jesus Christ out of the schools, government, and social structure of the Christian based cultures of the West are in high gear, doing all they can to minimize, undermine, and if possible, outlaw the influence of the founda-

Judeo-Christian West is disconnected from the danger that is lurking beyond its borders. They don’t recognize it nor do they comprehend it, and the leaders of the land are “void of judgment” (reprobate)!

As a matter of fact, *many of the leaders* in the United States, Canada, Australia, and throughout much of Europe and England don’t have a good understanding of the scope or magnitude of peril that is hovering around their civilized cultures. It’s as though most are in a state of denial, and sadly unaware of the similarities concerning the times when Israel’s prophets were warning the nation, just before the northern tribes were invaded by a foreign power. People today go about their daily lives conducting business as usual while our leaders handle the threats to our liberties and freedoms with a sense of ambivalence that is almost frightening and unreal.

The prophet Hosea said, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: ...I will also reject thee ...seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. As they were increased [with wealth, affluence, power and influence] so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame. ...and I will punish them for their ways and reward them their doings. For they shall eat, and not have enough: they shall commit whoredom, and shall not increase: because they have left off to take heed to the Lord. My people ask counsel at their stocks [idols] and their staff

[heart of witchcraft/spiritual prostitution] declareth unto them: for the spirit of whoredoms hath caused them to err, and they have gone a whoring from under their God” (Hosea 4:6–12).

The similarities of our Israelitish/Christian cultures today with those of ancient Israel are stunning and most disturbing. Admittedly, when one considers that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, it becomes sorely obvious that His standards of expectation have not changed and neither have His “historical patterns” when appropriating punishment *for correction*. Therefore, the ancient prophets of Israel have a poignantly piercing contemporary warning for our cultures today:

REPENT AND GET RIGHT WITH GOD!

As a people who recognize the “seed” by which salvation can be obtained, it is incumbent on all of us to REPENT and take on the values and standards of *Jesus Christ* as our personal Savior. We may not be able to save an unrepentant nation from the inevitable chastisement of God, but we can secure ourselves from the wrath to come. *Christ* is our ROCK of salvation and protection. It is by Him we are secured. He is looking for people willing to be part of the solution rather than contributors to the problems.

Won’t you consider this opportunity? “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. ...put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof (Romans 13:12–14). □

To better understand what Bible prophecy says about modern-day Israel and what is in store for our peoples in the days just ahead, be sure to request the free CD series titled, *The Biblical Origins of the British Commonwealth and United States of America!*

tional precepts of the Israelitish/Christian Bible.

Presently, the North American, British, Australian, and European cultures are in jeopardy. The world’s nations are in flux. *A time of transition has arrived!* Many issues demand the attention of the global community. The Middle East is on the brink of developing a nuclear arsenal, China is emerging as a burgeoning world power, Russia is rebounding and considering strange “bed-fellow alliances,” and Europe continues to forge its pattern with destiny, while the peril of the Jewish/Israeli and Palestinian conflict remains a powder keg; and the United States, the last remaining superpower, staggers as it struggles to resist losing its position as a worldwide “*balance of power*.”

So What Can We Do?

As it was in the days of Amos and Hosea before Israel fell, it is a very wealthy and affluent time. The United States is currently setting records in the stock market, interest rates are reasonable, and inflation is less than two percent. It’s a very good time, as far as that goes, regarding the possible lifestyles one can achieve in these Israelitish/ Christian societies. In general, these cultures are concerned about their way of life, fashion, travel, careers, friends, and family. The secular interests of most individuals, especially in North America, are at an all time high. Much of the population in the

2007 Holy Day Calendar

“These are the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons” (Leviticus 23:4).

- **New Testament Passover:** April 1*
- **Feast of Unleavened Bread:** April 3–9
- **Pentecost:** May 27
- **Feast of Trumpets:** September 13
- **Day of Atonement:** September 22
- **Feast of Tabernacles:** Sept 27–Oct 3
- **Last Great Day:** October 4

**Observed at sundown.*

SABBATH, CONTINUED from page 1

seventh day of the week, and cannot be applied to the rest. He says, "For in six days the Lord made the heaven and the earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; *wherefore* the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it." Almighty God ordered that all men should rest from their labor on the seventh day, because He too had rested on that day: He did not rest on Sunday, but on Saturday. On Sunday, which is the first day of the week, He *began* the work of creation. He did not finish it; it was on Saturday that He *ended* His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made; and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made" (Gen. ii. 2, 3) Nothing can more plain and easy to understand than all this; and there is nobody who attempts to deny it; it is acknowledged by everybody that the day which Almighty God appointed to be kept holy was Saturday, not Sunday. Why do you then keep holy the Sunday, and not Saturday? Sabbath, but that the *Christian* Sabbath has been changed to Sunday. Changed! but by whom? Who has the authority to change an express commandment of God? When God has spoken and said, Thou shalt keep holy the seventh day, who shall dare to say, Nay, thou mayest work and do all manner of worldly business on the seventh day; but thou shalt keep holy the first day in its stead? This is a most important question, which I know not how you can answer.

You are a Protestant, and you profess to go by the Bible and the Bible only; and yet in so important a matter as the observance of one day in seven as a holy day, you go against the plain letter of the Bible, and put another day in the place of that day which the Bible has commanded. The command to keep holy the seventh day is one of the ten commandments; you believe that the other nine are still binding; who gave you authority to tamper with the fourth? If you are consistent with your own principles, if you really follow the Bible and the Bible only, you ought to be able to produce some portion of the New Testament in which this fourth commandment is expressly altered, or at least from which you may confidently infer that it was the will of God that Christians should make that change in its observance which you have made. Let us see whether any such passages can be found. I will look for them in the writings of your own champions, who have attempted to defend your practice in this matter.

1. The first text which I find quoted upon the subject is this: "Let no man judge you in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days" (Col. ii. 16). I could understand a Bible Christian arguing from this passage, that we ought to make no difference between Saturday, Sunday, and every other day of the week; that under the Christian dispensation all such distinctions of days were done away with; one day was as good and as holy as another; there were to be no Sabbaths, no holy days at all. But not one syllable does it say about the obligation of the Sabbath being *transferred* from one day to another.

2. Secondly, the words of St. John are quoted, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (Apoc. i. 10). Is it possible that anybody can for a moment imagine that here is a safe and clear rule for changing the weekly feast from the seventh to the first day? This passage is utterly silent upon such a subject; it does but give us Scriptural authority for calling some one day in particular (it does not even say *which* day) "the Lord's day."

3. Next we are reminded that St. Paul bade his Corinthian converts, "upon the first day of the week, lay by them in store, that there might be no gatherings" when he himself came (1 Cor. xvi. 2). How is this supposed to affect the law of the Jewish Sabbath? It commands a certain act of almsgiving to be done on the first day of the week. It says absolutely nothing about not doing certain other acts of prayer and public worship on the seventh day.

4. But it was "on the first day of the week" when the disciples were assembled with closed doors for fear of the Jews, and Jesus stood in the midst of them; and again, it was eight days afterwards (that is, on the first day of the following week) that "the disciples were within, and Thomas with them," and Jesus again came and stood in the midst (John xx. 19, 26): that is to say, it was on the evening of the day of the Resurrection that our Lord first showed Himself to many disciples gathered together; and after eight days He again showed Himself to the same company, with the further addition of St. Thomas.

What is there in these facts to do away with the obligation of keeping holy the seventh day? Our Lord rose from dead on the first day of the week, and on the same day at evening He appears to many of His disciples; He appears again on that day [of the] week, and perhaps also on other days in the interval. Let Protestants, if they will, keep holy the first day of the week in grateful commemoration of that stupendous mystery, the Resurrection of Christ, and of the evidence He vouchsafed to give of it to His doubting disciples; but this is no scriptural authority for ceasing to keep holy another day of the week which God had expressly commanded to be kept holy for another and altogether different reason.

5. But lastly, we have the example of the Apostles themselves. "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts xx. 7). Here we have clear proof that the disciples came together for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and that they heard a sermon on a Sunday. But is there any proof that they had not done the same on Saturday also? Is it not expressly written concerning those same early Christians, that they "continued *daily* with one accord in the temple, breaking bread from house to house?" (Acts ii. 46). And as a matter of fact, do we not know from other sources that, in many parts of the Church, the ancient Christians were in the habit of meeting together for public worship, to receive Holy Communion, and to perform the other offices, on Saturdays just the same as on Sundays? Again, then, I say, let Protestants keep holy, if they will, the first day of the week, in order that they may resemble those Christians who were gathered together on that day in the upper chamber in Troas; but let them remember that this cannot possibly release them from the obligation of keeping holy *another* day which Almighty God has ordered to be kept holy, because on that day He "rested from all His work".

I do not know of any other passages of holy Scripture which Protestants are in the habit of quoting to defend their practice of keeping holy the first day of the week instead of the seventh; yet surely those which I have quoted are not such as should satisfy any reasonable man, who looks upon the written word of God as *they* profess to look upon it, namely as the *one only* appointed means of learning God's will, and who really desires to learn and to obey that will in all things with humbleness and simplicity of heart. It is absolutely impossible that a reasonable and thoughtful person should be satisfied, by the texts that I have quoted, that the almighty God intended the obligation of Saturday under the old law to be transferred to Sunday under the new. And yet Protestants do so transfer it, and never seem to have the slightest misgivings lest, in doing so, they should be guilty of breaking one of God's commandments. Why is this? Because, although they talk so largely about following the Bible and the Bible only, they are really guided in this matter by the voice of tradition. Yes, as much as they may have in fact no other authority to allege for this most important change. The present generation of Protestants keep Sunday holy instead of Saturday, because they received it as part of the Christian religion from the last generation, and that generation received it from the generation before, and so on backwards from one generation to another, by a continual succession, until we come to the time of the (so called) Reformation, when it so happened that those who conducted the change of religion in this country left this particular portion of Catholic faith, and practice untouched.

But, had it happened otherwise—had some one or other of the "Reformers" taken it into his head to denounce the observance of Sunday as a Popish corruption and superstition, and to insist upon it that Saturday was the day which God had appointed to be kept holy, and that He had never authorized the observance of any other—all Protestants would have been obliged in obedience to their professed principle of following the Bible and the Bible only, either to acknowledge this teaching as true, and to return to the observance of ancient Jewish Sabbath, or else to deny that there is any Sabbath at all. And so, in like manner, any one at the present day who should be set about, honestly and without prejudice, to draw up for himself a form of religious belief and practice our of the written word of God, must needs

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BY THE

Brotherhood of St. Vincent of Paul.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE SANCTION OF THE

BISHOP OF CLIFTON, CARDINAL WISEMAN.

AND REPUBLISHED WITH THE APPROBATION OF

THE MOST REV. JOHN HUGHES, D.D.,

ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK.

VOL IV. COMPLETE IN ITSELF.



NEW YORK:
P. J. KENEDY,
EXCELSIOR CATHOLIC PUBLISHING HOUSE,
5 BARCLAY STREET.

come to the same conclusion: he must either believe that the Jewish Sabbath is still binding upon men's consciences, because of the Divine command, "Thou shalt keep holy the seventh day;" or he must believe that no Sabbath at all is binding upon them, because of the Apostolic injunction, "Let no man judge you in respect of a festival day, or of the Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is Christ's." Either one or the other of these conclusions he might honestly come to; but he would know nothing whatever of a *Christian* Sabbath distinct from the Jewish, celebrated on a different day, and observed in a different manner, simply because Holy Scripture itself nowhere speaks of such a thing.

Now, mind in all this you would greatly misunderstand me if you supposed I was quarreling with you for acting in this matter on the true and right principle, in other words, a Catholic principle, viz., the acceptance, without hesitation, of that which has been handed down to you by an unbroken tradition. I would not tear from you a single one of those shreds and fragments of Divine truth which you have retained. God forbid! They are the most precious things you possess, and by God's blessing may serve as clues to bring you out of that labyrinth of error in which you find yourselves involved, far more by the fault of your forefathers three centuries ago than by your own. What do I quarrel with you for is, not your inconsistency in occasionally acting



on a true principle, but your adoption, as a general rule, of a false one. You keep the Sunday, and not the Saturday; and you do so rightly, for this was the practice of all Christians when Protestantism began; but you have abandoned other Catholic observances which were equally universal at that day, preferring the novelties introduced by the men who invented Protestantism, to the unvarying tradition of above 1500 years. We blame you not for making Sunday your weekly holyday instead of Saturday, but for rejecting tradition, which is the only safe and clear rule by which this observance can be justified. In outward act we do the same as yourselves in this matter; we too no longer observe the Jewish Sabbath, but Sunday in its stead; but then there is this important difference between us, that we do not pretend, as you do, to derive our authority for so doing from a *book*, but we derive it from a *living teacher*, and that teacher is the Church. Moreover, we believe that not every thing which God would have us to know and to do is written in the Bible, but that is also an unwritten word of God, which we are bound to believe and to obey, just as we believe and obey the Bible itself, according to that saying of the Apostles, "Stand fast and hold the traditions which you have learned, *whether by word of by our epistle*" (2 Thess. ii 14). We Catholics, then, have precisely the same authority for keeping Sunday holy instead of Saturday as we have for every other article of our creed, namely, the authority of "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth" (1 Tim. iii 15); whereas you who are Protestants have really no authority for it whatever; for there *is* no authority for it in the Bible, and you will not allow that there *can be* authority for it anywhere else. Both you and we do, in fact, follow tradition in this matter; but *we* follow it, believing it to be a part of God's word, and the Church to be its divinely-appointed guardian and interpreter; you follow it, denouncing it all the time as a fallible and treacherous guide, which often "make the commandment of God of none effect." □

In the U.S. edition of *The Clifton Tracts* published in New York by Edward Dunigan and brother, this tract on the Sabbath appeared in Volume IV. In the British edition published by Burns and Oates, London, it appeared in Volume III, Tracts on Christian Doctrine, Tract #48. It is reproduced here "as is."

In loving memory...

On the Sabbath of May 19, member Steve Schneblin of Spencer, Indiana, attended services with the Indianapolis congregation, then got astride his motorcycle to return home. It was not until Sunday morning that we received news he had crashed into the passenger side of a pickup truck that pulled out in front of him. He was taken to the nearest hospital in southern Indiana. His injuries were so severe that he was then airlifted to Methodist Hospital at Indianapolis, where he was anointed by the minister for his injuries. He died Friday evening, May 25th.

He is survived by a half-brother and a sister. There was a memorial service for Steven at Sabbath services on June 2nd. He will be greatly missed by the whole congregation, as he always had a smile and a cheery "Hello" for all. But our sorrows are eased when we realize the incredible future awaiting all of God's people. □

Submitted by Frank Denman

Come to the Feast in Australia!

Now is the time to make plans to attend God's Feast of Tabernacles for 2007!

You are invited to make those plans to visit with your brethren in Australia for the Feast to be held once again in Ballina, which is situated at the mouth of the Richmond River, in the Northern Rivers district of New South Wales, and is around a 2.5 hour drive south of Brisbane via the Gold Coast. From Sydney it is about a 9 hour drive, or a little over an hour by plane, arriving at Ballina Byron Gateway Airport, which is situated 5 km. (2.5 miles) from Ballina CBD.

Ballina is blessed with a fabulous climate with expected temperatures ranging from a minimum 13.7 C (59 F) to a maximum 24.6 C (76 F), just perfect to enjoy the 32 km. of white sandy beaches or the calm water of the Richmond River, North Creek, or Shaws Bay. Look forward to a relaxing river cruise, exploring the spectacular views of the lush hinterland with many plantations ranging from coffee, avocados, macadamias, etc.

Also the time of the Feast coincides with the annual migration of the humpback whales, which can be viewed from any of the coastal headlands, or during a leisurely breakfast at Shelleys Restaurant on the beach.

This year we will be blessed to have worship services held at the Sponsors Function Room at Ballina Jockey Club, with a truly peaceful country outlook.

For information as to accommodations (with costs to suit all budgets and requirements) and travel details, contact: Herb and Tui Haupt. □

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Be sure to send for our free literature, "God's Seasonal Plan" and "The Fall Festivals." If you are new to God's holydays, you'll be enlightened and amazed! If you are familiar with them, you will be given even deeper understanding. Send for them now, today, before you forget.

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Understanding the Feast of Tabernacles!



- What on earth is God doing? And what is His plan for *you*?
- What is the Feast of Tabernacles and what significance does it have for Christians today?
- Why did the New Testament church observe the Feast?
- Why will Jesus Christ re-institute it at His return?
- Why is there a 1,000-year difference between the first and second resurrections?
- Why and when is Satan going to be bound for one thousand years?
- What place does the Feast of Tabernacles have in the Plan of God?
- Does He have a plan and how does He intend on solving mankind's problems?
- What will happen to all those billions who have lived and died, having never heard the name of Jesus Christ?

Request your *free* DVD today to understand what the Feast of Tabernacles is all about—and how it concerns *you*!

Perilous times are ahead (2 Timothy 3:2)! Today we are hearing of wars, rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, and all manner of disasters. And it only going to get *worse*! Without God's direct intervention, mankind will soon self destruct (Matthew 24:22). People wonder, what on earth is God doing? If He is all powerful, why doesn't He intervene? Why doesn't He put an end to all the hellish things going on?

We have good news: God *is* all powerful, and He *is* on His throne, and He *does* have a plan, and He *is* intent on solving mankind's problems. He is on a countdown to implement His plan. His plan has been buried in His book, the Bible, but disregarded by most for centuries. His plan of salvation is revealed in a set of holydays that the world has generally rejected and sneered at, labeling them "*Jewish* holydays." Yet Jesus Christ, our example, kept them all. Jesus never kept a Sunday or a Christmas or an Easter one day in His life!

One of His holydays, the Feast of Tabernacles, has great significance for the world in general and for God's called-out ones in particular. The Feast of Tabernacles was kept in the Old Testament, by Jesus and His disciples in the New, and will be kept in the world tomorrow after His second coming, so why shouldn't we keep it now, today? The answer is, *we should*! Zechariah 14:9–16 reveals how Jesus Christ, upon His return, will establish God's rule of law throughout the entire world, commencing with the Feast of Tabernacles! The fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles will be vitally instrumental in preparing for the resurrection of the rest of the dead (John 7:37,38; 1 Corinthians 15:52–52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17; Revelation 20:5–6).

The Church of God International encourages you to send for our special free DVD, *Understanding the Feast of Tabernacles!*



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