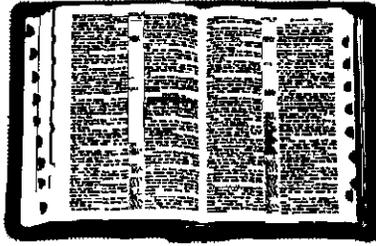


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES



"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me" — John 5:39.

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" — Acts 17:11.

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

VOLUME XXIII

FEBRUARY, 1982

NUMBER 2

Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

Ken Green

2212 Jordan Lane, S.W.
Huntsville, Alabama 35805



THE RIGHT TO DECIDE

"And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God?" (Genesis 50:19). A growing number in our time apparently feel they can answer that question in the affirmative. A recent editorial in the Huntsville Times reported that more than half of the British pediatricians who responded to an opinion poll said they felt that handicapped babies who were rejected by their parents should be allowed to die. Another poll indicated that 60 percent of the pediatricians felt the decision to let the handicapped baby live or die should depend on the severity of its handicap.

It frightens me to hear of such casualises toward human life on the part of those whose profession it is to preserve it. This editorial states: "**Doubtless there are situations in which to our human eyes it appears that a pathetically handicapped newborn child might be 'better off dead.'** These eyes, however, are human and do not see the future. And it is not taking a quantum leap to go from deciding that a child should not live because of physical handicaps to deciding that he or she should not live because of political, social, racial or whatever other reasons might develop in our Orwellian future."

It hasn't taken long for society to move from unconcern for the unborn child to apathy toward the handicapped and rejected child. "Discontinuance of life functions" for handicapped adults is being defended more and more. The latter end is really no

worse than the beginning, in this case. The question that surely should be answered is: "Am I in the place of God?"

THE WHITE OF AN EGG

Eliphaz had just opened the affirmative in that famous debate. The proposition: "Job is suffering greatly because Job has sinned greatly." As is the nature of polemics, he minced no words. No quarter was given to his adversary, and none was requested.

Job seemed dismayed, even confused over the turn of events. "My friends are like wet weather streams that overflow in the Winter and Spring. But in the blistering hot Summer, when a fellow needs some refreshment, he finds nothing but a dry bed" (See Job 6:15-21). Job needed someone to put his arm around him and comfort him. He wasn't interested in debating their proposition!

"**Can that which is unsavory be eaten without salt?**" he asked. "Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?" (6:6). There are two ways Job might have intended his words. Life was tasteless. It held no joy or pleasure. All flavor was lost. Then again, the words of his friend were as bland as food without seasoning. They were as tasteless as the white of an egg.

There are many things that go better with a little seasoning. These may be needful, and they may be nourishing. They may even be medicinal. But as the children's song expresses it, "A spoonful of sugar makes the medicine go down."

Reproof is like that. It's a duty. But it's always a distasteful thing. A little brotherly kindness (2 Peter 1:7; Gal. 6:1) will make it much more palatable and easy to swallow. I've known of instances in which brethren have rebuked others unkindly and were somewhat taken aback when their "good intentions" were not well received. We would do well to remember that those eggs are tasteless little things anyway. Few people can eat them without a little salt. Add the salt of kindness.

Many Bible doctrines are repugnant to most people. The idea that "only members of the church of Christ will be saved" is certainly of that nature to the average person who conceives of the church as just

another denomination. Misconceptions must be corrected and the truth must be taught. But "them eggs sure need some salt!" "But speaking the truth in love..." said Paul (Eph. 4:15). Let's sprinkle on the salt of love.

Affliction is ever a tasteless thing. Job found no pleasure in it. But the seasoning of patience saw him through. "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise" (Heb. 10:36). "Behold we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (James 5:11). Let's be sure to add a pinch of the salt of patience to our trials.

Our speech should be seasoned with salt that we might know how to answer every man (Col. 4:6). The speech of many Christians has no edification, no godliness, and absolutely no benefit. Frivolous thoughts and questionable, if not downright vulgar, jokes corrupt their vocabulary. **"Let no corruptible speech proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying..."** (Eph. 4:29) The speech of too many is rotten, negative, critical, and full of maggots. It needs the purifying quality of a little salt.

Death is an unsavory expectation. We have a natural dread of the unknown. Even Jesus did not relish the thought of death (Heb. 5:7). But **"for the joy set before him he endured the cross"** (Heb. 12:2). Thoughts of eternal life are just the seasoning we need for that unfavorable dish.

Friends, let's not eat or serve these dishes without salt. There's no taste in the white of an egg. Add some seasoning to your life. Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

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Jim McGuigan

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enant be made with the church of Christ if the church never had a previous covenant made with it? Has God cast off the Jews? Is Abraham in the church? Is the kingdom of the New Testament a "restored" kingdom? Has there always been a kingdom of God? Are you sure? What of Daniel 2:44? But, then again, what of Psalm 29:10? Interested? Why don't you take a look! Maybe this little book will put some things together for you. It helped me!

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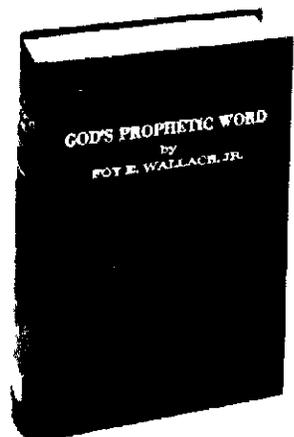
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Editorial

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A PERNICIOUS ERROR LIVES ON

In this issue of the paper we carry a lengthy article on Premillennialism, by J. T. Smith. It is clearly stated and well illustrated with charts and should prove useful not only in studying the subject 'but also in teaching against this error which, unfortunately, is alive and thriving. This material will be put into tract form and brother Smith is making arrangements to send it free to brethren in the Philippines, Nigeria and other places where recent efforts have been made to overthrow the faith of some churches and preachers.

There is a tendency for some to think that because an issue has been thoroughly thrashed in one generation, lines of fellowship drawn, and in some cases, error so identified and sealed off that it appears to be no longer a threat to the bulk of the churches, that the error will therefore go away forever. But all it takes is one untaught generation to prepare the soil for the enemy to sow tares while the rest sleep. There is evidence that premillennial brethren are becoming more militant and are spending much money and exerting much effort to infiltrate the ranks of faithful brethren in foreign fields. This has already come to light in both Nigeria and the Philippines. Robert Boyd of Louisville, Kentucky has personally visited in both these fields and has put his radio program on several stations in these and other countries. He has equipped native preachers whom he could influence with printed materials to indoctrinate them on the basic premises of this doctrinal error.

Premillennialism Lives Among Churches Of Christ

Within a thirty mile range of downtown Louisville, Kentucky, there are 26 known premillennial Churches of Christ. They date to the time and influence of R. H. Boll who lived and died in Louisville. WORD AND WORK is still published here. The Portland Christian School (pre-school through high school) still operates. A college at Winchester, Kentucky (where the famous Neal-Wallace Debate took place) folded about three years ago. There are a few other pockets of strength for this movement among churches of Christ, though Louisville is still the stronghold. Some of the premillennial congregations in this area are fairly large.

Premillennialism among brethren was borrowed from denominationalism and it is no accident that the churches and preachers associated with it manifest a

tolerant and compromising attitude toward denominational churches and error. One of the larger of these churches is known to dismiss Sunday evening services at times when a neighboring Baptist Church is having a "Revival" so they can attend. The Baptist church has been known to return the favor. The editor has personally observed the warmth of association some of their preachers show for preachers of the Christian Church in this area. When Carl Ketcherside and Leroy Garrett come to this area they are welcomed with open arms by both the Christian Churches and premillennial churches of Christ. Several years ago premillennial churches in the Louisville area bought a large ad in the local newspaper to endorse a Billy Graham Crusade and to register their opposition to churches of Christ which opposed Graham and his Crusade. They have an aversion to debating, though Robert Boyd moderated for a Filipino preacher in a debate last October in Davao City, Philippines.

We must teach the younger generation concerning these matters and we must do it NOW. We are a long time removed from the major battles of the late 1920s, 30s and 40s. Not only do we have second and third generations not properly taught, but many of those converted out of denominationalism have had their minds saturated for years with one form or another of this error.

Premillennialism Lives In Denominationalism

The so-called evangelical churches and especially the independent, fundamental denominations are nearly all premillennial in their outlook toward Bible prophesy and future world events. Billy Graham aids and abets this cause. Hal Lindsey has written several books which have sold into the millions (such as *The Late Great Planet Earth* and *Armageddon Now*) and have been popular best-sellers. A number of the churches associated with the famous "Moral Majority" are thoroughly premillennial. Many of the better known faith healers are premillennial. Such popular radio preachers as J. Vernon McGhee, Oliver Greene (now deceased, but whose programs continue either with re-runs of his tapes or with his son preaching the same errors), Herbert and Garner Ted Armstrong, to say nothing of the radio efforts of Adventists and others, pour out daily doses of this hodge-podge of deadly spiritual poison. Jehovah's Witnesses bring it from door to door. Time after time gospel preachers are called on to help church members answer questions raised by these deceitful workers. This false system of error is responsible for greatly complicating efforts of Christians to teach the truth because it warps and twists every part of the Bible to fit the pattern demanded by the engineers of this doctrinal maze. From the Abrahamic promises of Genesis 12 to the utterances of the prophets of Israel and Judah, to Babylon and back, through Matthew 24, I Thessalonians 4 and all the way to the end of the book of Revelation, these doctrinal quacks have wrested the word of God not only to their own

destruction but to the hindrance of some who might be able to see the truth were it not for the hang-ups created by this mass of misinformation.

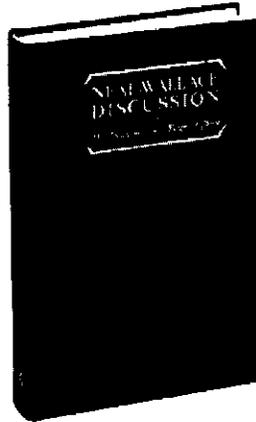
Premillennialism Lives In World Politics

It is sad to see what Premillennialism does to undermine Bible study in the hearts of so many people caught up in denominationalism. It is heartbreaking to see it make any progress at all among those who have vowed to speak as the oracles of God. But it is downright dangerous to the peace and security of the world when it enters world politics. It is contended by nearly all premillennialists that the nation of Israel must go back to Palestine. Jesus is to come back to earth and reign on David's throne from Jerusalem. This view leads its proponents to promote the cause of Zionism in world politics. It regards the Jewish people as still a favored people who are to receive special attentions from the Lord. They therefore may be expected to use their influence in favor of legislation and foreign policy which gives preferential treatment to Israel. On his last visit to the United States, Prime Minister Begin had a visit with Moral Majority leader, Jerry Falwell. In spite of the fact that the New Testament teaches that "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34) and both Jew and Gentile are reconciled to God through the cross of Christ and in the body of Christ (Eph. 2:14-18), these preachers with their powerful lobbying organizations are pressuring Congress and the present administration (as they did past administrations) to make decisions internationally which are pro-Israel and anti-Arab. This encourages political and military adventurism on the part of the nation of Israel. The world is in a big enough mess without quack preachers bolstering military conquests by a nation which stands before God on the same footing as all other peoples. There is nothing anti-Semitic about this. God's grace is extended to both Jew and Gentile through the gospel of his Son (Rom. 1:16-17; Acts 2:38-39). Those who embrace the gospel are God's chosen people. Of the church Peter wrote "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2:9).

We are indebted to brother Smith for his excellent material. Why not drop him a note of appreciation. If you differ with him, he would still be glad to hear from you. Extra copies of this issue will be for sale as long as the supply lasts. First come-first served. Religious Supply Center has advertised several helpful study books on this subject in this issue. We especially recommend God's Prophetic Word by Wallace and the Neal-Wallace Debate.

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Though the doctrine of Premillennialism is taught by most every major denomination, there are but few brethren who believe in the theory. Recently, brethren from Louisville, Ky brought this doctrine to the Philippine Islands and spread it among churches of Christ.

Though the word "Premillennialism" sounds very complicated, it is actually a very simple word. "Pre," meaning "before," and "millennial" meaning 1,000. Hence the theory of Premillennialism is as follows:

(1) God promised and His prophets (Ezekiel and Daniel) prophesied that He would set up an earthly kingdom with Christ on David's literal throne in Jerusalem.

(2) That the kingdom of Old Testament promise and prophecy has not yet come into existence.

(3) Though the kingdom was announced "at hand" by both John and Jesus, it never has appeared.

(4) Jesus is King by right, but is not now actually on His throne.

(5) The kingdom of Old Testament prophecy was postponed because national Israel rejected Christ.

(6) Christ presented in parables a new announcement of the new and unexpected aspect (church age) the kingdom would assume during an anticipated age of the king in rejection and absence from the world (Kingdom of God, by R. H. Boll, Page 70).

(7) In order for the prophecy of Daniel 2:44 to be fulfilled, pagan Rome must come back into existence with a world dictator over a 10 part kingdom.

(8) The Jews must be restored as a nation, return to Palestine, and be converted en masse, in order that Christ can be king "in fact," instead of merely a "crown prince."

(9) The temple of Solomon will be rebuilt and a Jewish system of worship will be restored.

(10) There will be a "rapture"—the saints, both living and dead, will meet the Lord in the air and continue there for a time.

(11) There will be two resurrections in the future, one of the saints at the "rapture," and one of the wicked at the end of the 1,000 years which will be the end of the world.

(12) At the time of the "rapture," there will come a time of "the great tribulation" upon the earth, which the saints will escape.

(13) After the "rapture" a period of time will pass, perhaps 7 years, and Christ will leave the throne of His

majesty in heaven and occupy the literal throne of David for a literal 1,000 years.

(14) As king on David's literal throne in Jerusalem, Jesus shall engage in a carnal "battle of Armageddon."

(15) Christ's coming is imminent.

Thus the theory of Premillennialism is that when Daniel prophesied of the kingdom that was to be established (Daniel 2:44), he was speaking of Christ coming to sit upon David's literal throne in Jerusalem and rule over all Israel. When the Jews rejected Christ, the prophecy was postponed and the church was substituted instead. Now, according to the theory, Christ has promised to return and fulfill the promise of Daniel 2:44 by reigning in Jerusalem on David's literal throne for 1,000 years according to Revelation chapters 19 and 20. Thus according to the theory, "pre" means "before" and "millennial" means 1,000. Hence Christ will begin His reign before the 1,000 years of Revelation 20.

The Premillennial Theory—Part I

In our study I believe it will be to our advantage to divide the theory into 5 different parts, examining each part separately. We will include the first four statements of the theory in part # 1 of our study.

I do not suppose that any serious student of the Bible would deny that God promised, in the book of prophecy, that He would set up "His Kingdom." Neither is there any doubt as to "WHEN" it was to be established.

You will recall that in Daniel 2, Nebuchadnezzar had a dream. The dream was of the image of a man whose form was magnificent. Nebuchadnezzar called all his magicians, and astrologers, and sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, to show the king his dream. They told him if he could tell them the dream, they would give him the interpretation thereof. The king said he could not remember the dream, and unless they told him the dream and the interpretation thereof they would all be cut in little pieces.

Daniel sought "an audience" with the king and said, "there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known unto Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days" (Daniel 2:38). Then Daniel tells the dream of the great image Nebuchadnezzar saw.

The image which Nebuchadnezzar saw had a head of gold, arms and breast of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, and whose legs were of iron, with the feet and toes part of iron and part of clay. Then Daniel gives the interpretation of the dream. (Next Page)

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He said king Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold (v. 38). Daniel was simply showing that Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was represented by the head of gold. However, "another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass which should bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron. . . (vs. 38-40). Thus history reveals that the 2nd and 3rd kingdoms that should follow the Babylonian kingdom were the Medes and Persians, and the Grecian kingdom under Alexander the great. The fourth kingdom, that would follow the Grecian kingdom, was the Roman empire. Both Bible and secular history confirm that this is what did take place.

Daniel also prophesied that "in the days of these kings (of the Roman empire, jts) the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and it shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces all of these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever" (v. 44). Thus, all admit that God's prophecy, according to Daniel, was that during the days of the Roman kings, God would set up a kingdom that would never be destroyed.

However, the problem arises when brethren (1) want to make it a literal kingdom in literal Jerusalem with Christ sitting and ruling on David's literal throne; (2) and saying that even though the kingdom was prophesied by both John the Baptist and Christ as being "at hand," it did not come "in fact." I believe both of the above statements are erroneous.

First of all, it is simply an *assumption* to say that Christ was coming to Jerusalem to establish a literal kingdom and sit upon David's literal throne. Some brethren contend that the prophecy of Daniel was "postponed." Where is the passage of Scripture that indicates this? Either the prophecy was fulfilled, or it failed. Notice the following chart.

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PROPHECY — UNFULFILLED OR FAILED — WHICH?

If Unfulfilled:

1. Who Can Give The Meaning?

II Pet. 1:20-21

2. Only Deity Can Give The
Meaning Of Prophecy!

I Cor.2:9-12 - Eph.3:2-5

If Failed:

1. Spoken By False Prophet Deut.
18:21-22

Next we notice one of the great mistakes of the Jews of the Old and New Testament periods is the same mistake of premillennialists today. They all want to make the kingdom that God was to establish a literal, physical kingdom here on earth with Christ on David's literal throne in literal Jerusalem. God made no such promise. In fact, every specific thing taught by Jesus about the kingdom is that it would be a SPIRITUAL KINGDOM, and not a literal, physical kingdom like the kingdoms of David and Solomon in the Old Testament.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM PHYSICAL OR SPIRITUAL

Christ's Kingdom Is Not:

1. Of This World - John 18:36

2. Meat & Drink - Rom. 14:17

3. Entered By Natural Birth John 3:1-7

4. Entered By Saying Lord, Lord
Matt.7:21

Christ's Kingdom Is:

1. Within You - Luke17:21

2. Righteousness, Joy, Peace - Rom. 14:17

3. Entered By Spiritual Birth - John 3:1-7

4. Entered By Doing Father's Will

Matt:7.21 - 1 Pet:1.23

The very thing that Christ argues when he speaks concerning his kingdom is that it IS NOT physical, but spiritual. And then in many of the same verses, as you can see from the above chart, he argues that IT IS SPIRITUAL in its nature.

When Jesus began His personal ministry in John 3, a ruler of the Jews, Nicodemus, came to Jesus and told Him that he accepted Him as a teacher come from God. Now here was a man that had every right, according to Jewish and premillennial beliefs, to be a part of the kingdom prophesied by Daniel. He was a Jew, even a ruler of the Jews. Was he, because of his being of the literal seed of Abraham, eligible to be a part of God's kingdom? Jesus said he was not! In fact the very second lesson recorded by John of Jesus' ministry involved His teaching concerning His kingdom, and he told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Nicodemus was amazed at this teaching. "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" (v. 4). Nicodemus had missed the point entirely, just as

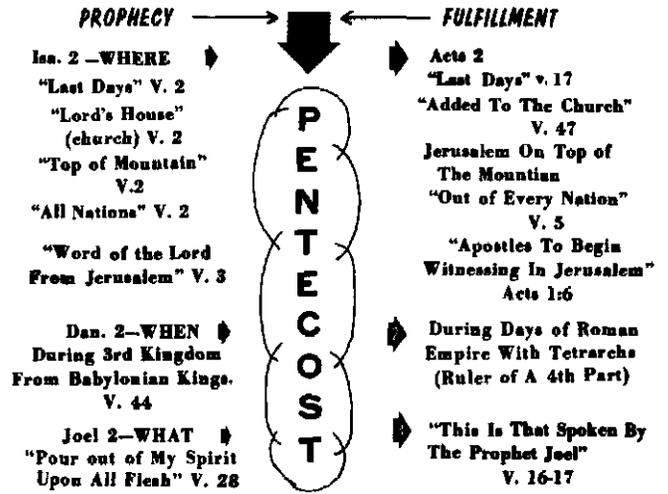
the premillennialists miss the point today. All he could visualize was literal. But Jesus explained that it was not the fleshly or Israelite that was destined to be a part of His kingdom, but "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (v. 5). What did Daniel prophesy? That God would set up His kingdom. To whose kingdom is Christ referring? God's! Then Jesus told this Jewish ruler, who thought, according to all he understood of God's kingdom, that he was of the proper physical lineage to be a part of it, "ye must be born again (v.7).

So Jesus, in explaining His kingdom, said it is "not of this world." (The word "world" is from the Greek word kosmos which means "order or arrangement of things"), else would my servants fight (wage a carnal battle) that I might not be delivered into the hands of the Jews" (John 18:36). Paul explained it was not eating and drinking, but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17). And as Jesus explained, it is entered by a birth of water (baptism) and the Spirit (John 3:1-7). It is not entered by saying Lord, Lord, but by doing the will of the Father (Matt. 7:21; 1 Peter 1:23). Thus in the very beginning of His ministry, Christ introduced His kingdom as spiritual.

You will recall that Daniel said God had made known these things unto him that would take place in the "latter days." But Isaiah 2:2-3 also talks about what is to take place in the "last days." "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

Now from these passages we learn that the "Lord's house" would be established in the "last days," and the word of the Lord would go forth from Jerusalem. I understand the expression "The Lord's house" to mean the church (cf. 1 Tim. 3:15). Jesus said that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations (as Isaiah prophesied) beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47).

Then Joel's prophecy of what would happen in the "last days" (Joel 2:28-32), was quoted in Acts 2:16-21 and Peter said, this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (v. 16).

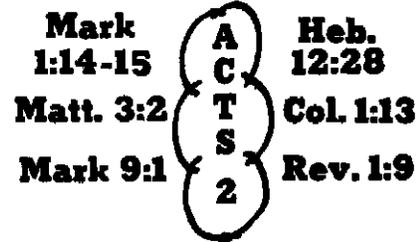


We can see from the above chart that the prophecy of Daniel 2, Isaiah 2, and Joel 2 were fulfilled on the first pentecost after Christ's resurrection.

Thus to sum up what has been said by Daniel, Isaiah, and Joel, they said in the last days the Lord would establish his kingdom (which would be entered by baptism as the Spirit directed, John 3:5; the Lord's house or church) would be established and all nations would flow unto it, or as Jesus said, His name was to be preached among all nations (Luke 24:47); and Joel's prophecy of what would happen in the "last days" DID HAPPEN according to Acts 2:16.

Hence, according to the above information, the kingdom of Daniel's prophecy and the Church of Isaiah's prophecy are one and the same thing, both are entered by baptism. Thus both the Jews and the premillennialists look for the fulfillment of a prophecy that has already been fulfilled.

Kingdom NOW In Existence



Those who are Christians, who believe in Premillennialism, are not foolish enough to deny that we are a part of Christ's kingdom today, for Col. 1:13 plainly says we have been translated into it. However, according to a conversation I had in the Philippines with brother Robert Boyd, the kingdom of Col. 1:13 is "Absolutely not the kingdom of Daniel 2:44." But where is God's prophecy of two kingdoms? Thus according to premillennialists, God promised a kingdom which we do not have, and has translated us into a kingdom which he had not promised. Who can believe it?

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According to premillennialists, Christ is supposed to change positions before the end. He is supposed to leave the throne of his Father David, which is now in heaven (Acts 2:29-35) and return to His footstool, the earth, to reign for 1,000 years. However, David, as quoted by Peter in Acts 2, said God would not leave Christ in the grave (v, 29). This was fulfilled, Peter said, when Christ was raised from the dead (v. 31). Christ began sitting on Pentecost, for he sat down at the right hand of the throne of God after He ascended (vs. 34-35). And, Paul said He must reign until he hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death (1 Cor. 15:25-26). The end of death will come at the judgment, thus Christ will occupy his present position (of sitting and reigning over his spiritual kingdom) until the end.

Besides, Christ was to be raised up to "sit on David's throne while he slept with his fathers" (II Samuel 7:12-13). But, if Christ is to sit on David's throne after the "rapture," as premillennialists tell us, then it will not be while "David is sleeping with the fathers," for they will all, according to the premillennial theory, have already been raised.

The Premillennial Theory—Part 2

This section of our study will include numbers 5 and 6 of our explanation at the beginning of this study on the salient points of the theory.

It is claimed that one of the reasons Christ postponed His kingdom was because of the rejection of the Jews. However, in Matthew 3, when John the Baptist began to preach, "repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (v. 2), the Scriptures say, "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the regions round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins" (vs. 5-6).

Also, in John 6 when the 5,000 were fed with the five barley loaves and two small fishes, vs. 14-15 say, "Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone." Does this sound like they had not accepted him to be their king? They understood all right who He was. However, they already had their minds made up as to what kind of kingdom He should establish (literal instead of spiritual) and later rejected Him because He did not establish the kind of kingdom they expected. How great, however, would have been the problem had Jesus done what the Jews expected of Him according to Ezekiel's and Daniel's prophecies. Observe:

That Christ should come to Jerusalem and sit on David's literal throne ruling over National Israel and conquering all the nations.

Question: If their expectations had been fulfilled, what about all the prophecies of Isaiah, and David in the Psalms, concerning a "suffering saviour"? For Christ could not have been conquered and would have never died on the cross. Thus, both the Jews ex-

pectation, along with the premillennialists theory, would completely have annihilated Christ's suffering on the cross (I Peter 1:9-11); remission of sins, both Jew and Gentile being included in God's plan (Eph. 2:16); etc. On the other hand, if all the prophecies concerning the "suffering saviour" were to be fulfilled, is it possible that God never intended to establish His kingdom during the days of the Roman kings as Daniel prophesied, which puts God in the position of making two sets of promises both of which COULD NOT have been fulfilled without contradicting each other? Who can believe it?

However, if as we have already suggested, Christ's kingdom is spiritual, and his body (church) is spiritual, then He was to suffer and die that by His resurrection and ascension He might receive authority both in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18; Romans 1:4) and establish himself king of His kingdom and head of His body, the church, which is, of course, what happened.

The Premillennial Theory—Part 3

Now parts 7, 8, 9 of our explanation of the premillennial theory are the next points of our study.

According to the premillennial theory, in order for Daniel 2:44 to be fulfilled, pagan Rome must come back into existence with a world dictator over 10 world kingdoms. In fact we are made to wonder, because of some statements by brother R. H. Boll, whether Christ's failure to establish His kingdom was a result of the Jews rejection, or God's mistake.

The Jews Rejection Or God's Mistake — Which?

According to brother R. H. Boll in his book. *The Kingdom of God*. page 32. *"The Roman world-power then, though now it does not exist, as such, is to return. When it returns, the Roman power will be in the form of a ten-kingdom confederacy under one dominant head; which fact is indicated by the toes of the Image: more fully set forth in the ten horns of the fourth beast (Daniel 7); and clearly revealed to John in Revelation:... (Rev. 17:12-13; 19:11-21)."*

HOWEVER

On page 30 of the same book brother Boll says. *"But she (Rome. its) has never as yet. nor at any time in the past, taken on its final shape as a ten-kingdom world-power which Daniel and John beheld. (Daniel 2 and 7, and Revelation 13)."*

THUS

According to brother Boll. God sent Christ into the world (and Christ was willing to come) at a time when it would have been IMPOSSIBLE for the prophecies concerning the Kingdom to be fulfilled.

Also to show that when Daniel said "in the days of these kings" he was speaking of the Roman empire that was in existence during Jesus' lifetime, we know that Caesar was on the throne in Rome. However, there were rulers (kings) over provinces during these days who were under Caesar, and the proof is so stated in Luke 3:1 where these men are referred to as "tetrarchs" (ruler of a 4th part). Herod is one of those who is listed as a tetrarch. However, in Matthew 2:1, Herod is referred to as "king." Hence, Daniel's prophecy of God's kingdom being established during

the days of "kings" fits completely in this time period. Almost every premillennialist that you hear preach on the subject sooner or later brings up the "land promise" or God's giving the land of Canaan to Israel in fulfillment of the promise to Abraham and his seed in Genesis.

RESTORATION OF THE JEWS TO PALESTINE

- I. THE LAND PROMISE TO ABRAHAM & HIS SEED FULFILLED UNDER JOSHUA**
 - A. LAND OF CANAAN PROMISED TO ABRAHAM & HIS SEED GEN. 13:15, 15:18,17:7-8,**
 - B. THE LAND PROMISE WAS FULFILLED EXO. 6:4-8, JOSH. 21:43-45.**
- 2. THE JEWS & THE ABRAHAMIC PROMISE**
 - A. THE LAND PROMISE WAS FULFILLED UNDER JOSHUA 23:12-16.**
 - B. THE RESTORATION PROMISE WAS FULFILLED UNDER EZRA 1:1-4.**
 - C. THE SPIRITUAL PROMISE IS FULFILLED IN CHRIST GAL 3:26-29.**

**PROMISES FULFILLED
CEASE TO BE BINDING!**

As you will note from the above chart, every promise God made to Abraham and his seed was fulfilled. The promise of God's giving the land of Canaan was fulfilled under the leadership of Joshua. Also the Jews and Abraham's promise was fulfilled under Joshua with a warning in Joshua 23:43-45 that if they did not continue to serve God but turned to idol gods, God would drive them off the land. However in the above cited passages in Joshua, God said "not ought of the promise failed, all was fulfilled."

But premillennialists say that after driving the Jews out of the land into Babylonian captivity, He renewed the promise to bring them back into the land. Every promise made by Jeremiah was "accomplished" or "fulfilled" under king Cyrus according to II Chron. 36:22 and Ezra 1:1.

This only leaves the spiritual promise God made to Abraham in Genesis 22:18 when He promised to bless all nations through the "seed" of Abraham. In Galatians chapter three, Paul explains the spiritual promise.

The above chart shows that God intended to fulfill His promise to Abraham through Christ (v. 16). He also shows that the Law of Moses was added because of the transgressions of the people till (showing duration of time) the seed (Christ) should come. So, says Paul, "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (thus no longer under the law of Moses). Now, Paul says, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." Thus if one has been baptized into Christ, he is therefore a part of the body of Christ, Abraham's seed, and an heir according to God's promise to Abraham. Hence all God's promises to Abraham and his seed have been fulfilled.

Thus (the teaching of the premillennialists that the Jews must be restored to Palestine as a nation and be converted en masse as a nation is just a figment of their imagination. The truth of the matter is, today the Israel of God are those who have received "spiritual circumcision."

**NEW TESTAMENT
CIRCUMCISION**

- 1. Kind — Spiritual of the heart
Rom. 2:28-29**
- 2. Performed By — Deity
Col. 2:11-12**
- 3. Purpose — Cutting Off of the
Body of the Sins of
the Flesh Col. 2:11**
- 4. When? — In Baptism
Col. 2:12 Rom. 6:6
"Spiritual Jews"**

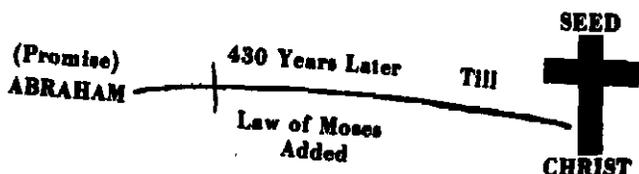
The Premillennial Theory—Part 3

Now parts 10-12 of our explanation of Premillennialism.

Premillennialists have taken a word that is not found in the Greek New Testament at all, but in the Latin, and continually talk about its fulfillment. The word is "rapture." Premillennial preachers preach about the "rapture" as if it is found on almost every page in the Bible. Of course the "idea" of the word "rapture" as used by the premillennialists is found in 1 Thess. 4:13-14. However, let me hasten to say that their application of it and their theory about it is not found.

The idea is that of "rising to meet the Lord." There is certainly no question about this happening according to the above passage. The problem arises when premillennialists say this is going to take place a thousand and seven years before the resurrection of the wicked. (Supposedly the raised saints will be with the Lord "somewhere" for 7 years before the millennium begins).

There is no evidence that there will be any "time



separation" between the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. 1 Thess. 4:13-17 is not a passage to be used as proof by the premillennialists. Here Paul has only the righteous under consideration. Yes, the word "first" is used in connection with the resurrection mentioned here. However, Paul's statement is that dead Christians will be raised before the living Christians are caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord, and Christians who have died are raised first. The resurrection of the wicked is not even under consideration in this passage.

1 Thess. 4:13-17
Does NOT Teach
Two Resurrections
It Does Teach That
The Righteous Dead
Will Be Raised Before
The Righteous Living
Are Taken

There are a number of passages, however, that do discuss both the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. According to the following chart, there will be an "hour" in which "all" shall hear the voice of the Lord and come forth, both the righteous and the wicked. Also, Acts 24:15 says there shall be "a" resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. And again, Paul said that when the Lord Jesus returned, he would take vengeance on those who obey not the gospel. But at that time, He will also be glorified in His saints (II Thess. 1:7-10). For Paul said "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more" (II Cor. 5:16).

When Will The Lord
Return ? 2 Peter 3:10

Who Will Be Raised
At Christ's Coming?
ALL!

John 5:28-29
Acts 24:15

The evidence is overwhelming when we read the passages that discuss a resurrection both of the just and the unjust. There will be "an hour" (definite point in time) when "All" shall come forth. There is no room for 1,000 years between.

The Premillennial Theory—Part 5

This part of our study will involve the final portion of the premillennial theory, covering points 13, 14 and 15.

The majority of the teaching that is supposed to prove the final part of the theory is found in Matthew 24 and in Revelation chapters 19 and 20.

The facts in the case are these. Matthew 24 is discussing the destruction of Jerusalem. Jesus said in Matt. 24:34 "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, until all these things be fulfilled." It is sometimes argued that the word "generation" means an "age" or "race," and thus Christ was discussing the end of time. However, Mr. Joseph Henry Thayer in his Greek-English Lexicon on page 112 says of the word *genea* translated "generation" in Matt. 24:34, "The whole multitude of men living at the same time; Matt. 24:34." So Jesus said "This" whole multitude of men who are living at this time shall not "pass." The word "pass" is from the Greek word *parerchomai* and means "to pass away, perish" (IBID p.488). Thus Jesus is simply saying that those people then living would not pass away or perish until the things he had prophesied be fulfilled. Hence, He was speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem and not the end of the world.

"But," someone may ask, "What about the teaching of Revelation chapters 19-20 on this subject"? "Isn't Christ to return and establish His kingdom here on earth and reign for 1,000 years in Jerusalem on David's literal throne?" Let's look at the book of Revelation and see just **what is said**.

John gives us an insight into the book of Revelation in the very first chapter and the first three verses that will help us to understand what is taught therein.

In verse 1, John made two points that must be understood in studying the book of Revelation. (1) God was revealing "things which must shortly come to pass." Also, "he came and signified... unto his servant John." The word "signify" simply means he presented it in "signs" or "symbols."

(2) In verse 3, he said the prophecies revealed should be read and observed, "for the time is at hand." Thus we understand from these statements that the things revealed were "yet future" but in the "near future," "at hand," "shortly to come to pass." So, these things were written in revelation specifically to give comfort to those who were being persecuted by the "great harlot" whom John identifies as "the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth" or Rome (Rev. 17:18). Hence, the book was written specifically to teach those who were being persecuted and killed for the cause of Christ, that in the end those who would worship and serve God would be victorious. Chapters 19 and 20 are the victory chapters with chapters 21 and 22 showing the ultimate of what those who are victorious will receive.

Now back to chapters 19 and 20. I contend that the majority of the things referred to are symbolic. Otherwise, we will have a literal "lamb" riding through heaven on a "white horse." But observe the

following chart, and after reading Revelation chapters 19 and 20, see how many of the twenty things listed you believe are literal.

Revelation 19, 20 Literal or Figurative — Which?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. The Great Harlot - 19:2 | 13. Fowls Flying To Supper - V. 17 |
| 2. Her Smoke - V. 3 | 14. Beast - Mark - Image - Vs. 19-11 |
| 3. Four Beasts Worshipping God - V. 4 | 15. Angel Coming Down - 20:11 |
| 4. Lamb V. 7 | 16. Key Chain Pit - V. 1 |
| 5. White Horse and Rider V. 11 | 17. Dragon - Tall Stars V. 2, 12:3-4 |
| 6. Eyes As Flames or Fire - V. 12 | 18. Bound - Bottomless Pit - V. 3 |
| 7. Many Crowns On His Head - V. 12 | 19. Shut - Sealed - V. 3 |
| 8. Vesture Dipped In Blood - V. 13 | 20. Thrones - Beheaded - V. 4 |
| 9. Armies On White Horses V. 14 | 21. Prison - Loose d - Battle - Vs. 7-8 |
| 10. Sword Out Of His Mouth V. 13 | 11. Camp of Saints Compassed - V. 9 |
| 11. Tread The Wine Press - V. 15 | 23. Fire and Brimstone - V. 10 |
| 12. name On His Thigh - V. 16 | 24. 1000 Years V. 2 |

Perhaps you only chose the 1,000 years. If so, why? Besides, in order for the 1,000 years to fit into the millennial theory, all of the things on our next chart would have to be taught in these two chapters. And, even though Revelation 19 and 20 are the "proof texts" given for the theory, notice according to the following chart that none of them are even mentioned.

REVELATION 19, 20 MILLENNIAL PROOF TEXT ??

Yet It Does Not Mention:

1. *The second coming of Christ.*
2. *A bodily resurrection,*
3. *Christ on earth.*
4. *An earthly reign.*
5. *Palestine*
6. *Jerusalem*
7. *The literal throne of David.*
8. *Resurrection of the Jews.*
9. *All the saved.*
10. *Flesh and blood.*
11. *Imminence*
12. *Us*

"But," someone says, "do you mean to tell me that when Christ returns that He will not be given His kingdom?" That's right. The facts of the matter are these. The premillennialist have Christ going in the wrong direction to receive His kingdom. (Read Daniel 7:13-14, cf. Acts 1:9). Christ received His kingdom when he came TO the Father—not FROM the Father.

Then What About Rev. 20:1-6?

The writer here concludes by showing that Satan has been overcome and is now bound so that he should deceive the nations no more. The Hebrew writer said that Christ by His death destroyed him that hath the power over death, even the devil" (Hebrews 2:14). Also, John said that the Son of God was manifest that he might destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8).

During the days of Christ and the apostles, Satan and his spiritual followers could deceive, and people were demon-possessed. However, that is not true today. Christ's death on the cross destroyed that

device of Satan. Notice what John said in Revelation 20:3, "that he (Satan) should deceive the nations no more." Man does not have to be deceived by Satan now, for we are not ignorant of his devices (2 Cor. 2:11). Christ came to make manifest the works of the devil, and said if we "resist the devil he will flee from us" (James 4:7). Peter says Satan does not deceive us, for he goes about "as a roaring lion," (1 Peter 4:8-9), not as one who "stalks his prey" but as a "roaring lion" seeking whom he may devour. Whom Peter said, "resist steadfast in the faith ..." So we are told not to let Satan get the advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices. We are told we may resist him, and if we do, he will flee from us. Thus, Satan is bound. He can deceive us no longer, unless we allow him to do so. However, this is predicated on our "having an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God ..." and allowing ourselves to "be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:12-13). So, as John pointed out in Rev. 20:3 no one should be deceived.

The First Resurrection of Revelation 20

But what about the "first resurrection" of Revelation 20:3? It seems to me that verse 4 explains it. "The souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and the word of God" in verse four are the ones who are reigning with Christ in vs. 4-5, and that is said to be the "first resurrection." Of time the Bible speaks of the freeing of people, who are held captive, as a resurrection. For example, when the children of Israel were in Babylonian captivity in Ezekiel 37, and God showed Ezekiel the "valley of dry bones," He said it represented His people in captivity. However, He was going to bring them out, and in 37:11-14 God describes it as "opening their graves and causing them to come out of their graves and live."

But we see the people of Rev. 20 described as the same people who had already been mentioned in Rev. 6:8-11 and being "under the altar" and begging for deliverance of their cause. They were told, "rest for a little season until thy fellowservants and thy brethren" that should be killed as they were, should "be fulfilled" (Rev. 6:9-11). Thus as we have the resurrection of a people held captive in Ezek. 37, so we also have a resurrection of a people held captive in Rev. 6 and 20. And the passage says, "and THEY lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (or long period of time).

Universal Peace

But if the preceding teaching is true, what of all the prophecies in Isaiah and Micah of the "peaceful nature" of the kingdom? When we understand that the kingdom of God is spiritual and not literal, then those promises also have spiritual application, and are not describing literal beasts of the field, but the nature of a people.

Please Renew Promptly

UNIVERSAL PEACE Isa.4:2 — Micah
4:3 Isa. 11:6-9, 65:25

**1. The Church — "Spiritual Kingdom" It A
Peaceful Organization:**

**A. Its Servants Should Not Fight
John 18:36**

**B. Its Weapons Are Not Carnal
II Cor.10:4**

**C. Its Members Are Peaceful In Nature —
Rom.14:17-19**

**2. The Church Is For All People, And Nations
Have No Identity In It
Eph. 2:11-17**

Though R. H. Boll said in his book *The Kingdom of God*, written in the 1920s, that the millennium is imminent, brother Boll is dead and Christ has not yet come. Besides, if premillennial teaching is true, we know that it cannot be imminent. (Observe the following chart).

Millennium Not Near

According to millennialists, certain conditions are going to have to be in existence before the millennium comes, for Example:

1. The Jews Will All Return To Jerusalem.
2. The Jews Will Be Re-Established As A nation.
3. The Jews Will Rebuild The Temple In Jerusalem.
4. A 10 Kingdom World-Ruling Roman Empire Will Exist.
5. This Empire Will Be Under A Roman World-Ruling Dictator.
6. I Thessalonians 4:13-17 Will Be Fulfilled.
7. The City Of Babylon Rebuilt

Conclusion

If Christ should return to earth, notice on the following chart the things that would have to take place in violation of the teaching of the Bible.

IF CHRIST RETURNS TO EARTH

1. He will not be a priest (Hebrews 8:4; 7:14).
2. There will be no forgiveness of sins.
There is evidence that there will be some sin even in the millennium" (R. H. Boll, *The Kingdom of God*, P. 163). cf. Hebrews 10:4
3. He will have a name inferior to the one he now has (Eph. 1:21).
4. He will not prosper (Jeremiah 22:30).
5. He could not have any more authority than he has now (Matthew 28:18-20; I Cor.15:27).

**THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT CHRIST WILL EVER SET FOOT
ON EARTH AGAIN!**

What then, does the Bible teach about Christ's 2nd coming? It teaches that "The Lord will come as a thief in the night in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10).

It teaches that both the just and the unjust—ALL will be brought into judgment at the same time (John

5:28-29; Acts 24:15).

But what about the kingdom and the end of the world?

WHAT IS TO TAKE PLACE

"...at Christ's coming" I Corinthians 15:23-26

"THEN cometh the end

WHEN

He shall deliver up the kingdom to God.—

WHEN

He shall put down (bring to an end — Gingrich; render inactive — Vine) all rule and authority and power.

FOR= GAR

He must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

Thus Christ is not coming back to BEGIN anything on earth. His coming will be an END of all things on earth, the premillennial brethren notwithstanding. For Jesus himself said, "And these are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me" (Luke 24:44). So, Jesus said it, that settles it, I believe it!

THE CHRISTIAN'S CROWN JEWELS (PART II)

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"Unto you therefore which believe, He is precious ..." 1 Pet. 2:7a

The apostle Peter used one word repeatedly in his two brief epistles to convey to his readers what it meant to be a Christian and what it meant to receive the blessings of Christ. That word was — "PRECIOUS." Eight times in eight chapters Peter uses that term to describe the blessings of Jesus. In 1 Pet. 2:7, Peter uses the term with reference to Christ Himself. Jesus is "THE PRECIOUS ONE," or "THE PRECIOUSNESS," i.e., it is from Him that all blessings originate. Among the cluster of jewels worn by the saint, there is one central jewel whose brilliance eclipses all the rest. It is Jesus. He is our central gem in a crown of blessings.

We gave notation last month to three aspects of Peter's preciousness:

1. Redeemed With The "PRECIOUS" Blood (1 Pet. 1:18-19).
2. Build Upon The "PRECIOUS" Corner Stone (1 Pet. 2:4-6).

3. Hope Through The "PRECIOUS" Promises (2 Pet. 1:2-4).

Now let's turn our attention to three more.

4. Trials of our faith are "PRECIOUS"

That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:6-7). Here the apostle introduces a subject that he will expound upon later, i.e., the theme of trials, tribulations and suffering. Note the outline of 1st Peter:

- a. Doctrine of Salvation, 1:1-2:12
- b. Doctrine of Submission, 2:13-3:12
- c. Doctrine of Suffering, 3:13ff

Beginning in 3:13, the apostle cautions us that if suffering comes, we need to be certain that we suffer for that which is right.

But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed (3:14).

For it is better ... that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong (3:17).

If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed (4:14).

If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed (4:16).

Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful creator in doing what is right (4:19).

Suffering has always been a great question confronting Christians. Why does God allow pain and anguish, disappointment and discomfort, various trials and tribulations? Peter gives the answer in 5:10 when he says, "And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you." Sometimes we have to go down in the forbidden valleys of life to realize our dependence from above. Sometimes we must experience trials in order to grow stronger. And sometimes we must suffer through the fiery furnace to attain perfection and be molded into the shape desired by God.

Why did Jesus have to suffer? For the same reason we do. "Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:8-9). Jesus

suffered to learn obedience and to be perfected. So must we.

In Malachi 3:1-2 the Messiah is pictured as being both (1) fire, and (2) soap. Now fire and soap are purifying agents. Who are the objects of the Messiah's purifying? "He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them" (vs. 3). Who were the sons of Levi? They were the priests of the elder covenant. Who are the Lord's priests under this covenant? Who is it that Malachi says will pass through the Messiah's refining fire? Why, it is the saints! We are the Lord's holy priesthood. We are the sons of Levi. And why must we pass through the fire? "So that they may present to the Lord offerings in righteousness" (vs. 3). Metals that were not purified were worthless. God purifies the Christian for we are "precious." We are His chosen vessels and He wishes us to be free from imperfections.

5. Gentle and Quiet Spirit is "PRECIOUS"

Let not your adornment be merely external ... but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God (1 Pet. 3:3-4).

In this section the apostle stresses submission and adornment. Pound for pound there has been more error taught here than on just about any other subject. Two things are demanded in verses 1-4: (1) the right *character* (wives are to be subject to their husbands "in the same way" as Christ was subject to the Father), and (2) the right *adornment*. In verse 3 Peter is not condemning, but rather is stressing priorities. (If Peter is condemning the braiding of hair and the wearing of jewelry, he also condemns the putting on of dresses!)

Verse 4 informs us that the attitude God desires in His people is one of a quiet and gentle spirit. A quiet spirit is a spirit that is at peace, one that works in a quiet fashion (2 Thess. 3:12), and has itself under control. In 1 Thess. 4:11 Paul urges us to make it our ambition to lead a "quiet life." Then he tells us how—"by attending to your own business and working with your own hands." I imagine we all could seek improvement in that category. Next, a gentle spirit is a spirit that submits to the authority of God. The original meaning of meekness (or gentleness) had to do with the taming of an animal. A meek animal was one that was trained and disciplined. Consequently, a meek spirit is one who brings himself in line with the discipline of God. Those who do are "precious" in His sight.

6. Like "PRECIOUS" Faith

Simon Peter ... to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 1:1).

How precious is the bond and union among God's people all over the globe. We are a people of "like precious faith." But how is our faith alike? What gives us a common bond?

- a. All of us hold to the same redeeming blood.

- b. All of us build on the same chief corner stone.
- c. All of us hope for the same promises.
- d. All of us experience the same trials.
- e. All of us are trying to develop the same meekness of character.

As a result we are men and women of "like precious faith." We all wear the same precious crown jewels of the Savior. Yes, "Blest Be The Tie That Binds." Can you think of anything more precious than that?

ANSWERS for our hope

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Valley Station, KY 40272



THE FREE WILL OF MAN

QUESTION: Recently we had some difficulty in our Bible Class trying to harmonize the free will of man and his accountability with some statements in the ninth chapter of Romans. Please comment on verses 10-21, especially verse 21—L.S. **ANSWER:** The verses in question read as follows: "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who are thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" (Rom. 9:10-21).

The figure of the potter and the clay is not always used to teach the same lesson. What it teaches depends upon its use and application in its context. For example, a different lesson entirely (from Rom. 9:10-21) is taught in Jer. 18:1-6;

"The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel" (Jer. 18:1-6).

While these verses teach the power and willingness of the divine potter, God, to transform that which has marred into a vessel of honor, it also teaches that in the final analysis it is conditioned upon the pliability of the clay which represents the volition of man. Until the individual yields to the will of the divine potter (which is always a thing of beauty and honor in behalf of the individual) the divine objective cannot be realized. Hence, the tender appeal of God to the "house of Israel" in verse six. These verses teach with great emphasis and clarity the free will and accountability of man. This is the very opposite of the use Calvinism makes of this figure which affirms that man is what he is because the divine potter made him that way irrespective of his will and according to a decree of God from all eternity.

The lesson taught in Roman 9:21 and its context emphasizes the prerogative of God in designing, molding, and executing the scheme of redemption for all men. We are the products of His creation and have no right to criticize such efforts on His part. He "endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," namely, the nation of Israel, until the divine purpose—the coming of the Messiah through whom salvation is provided for all—should be fulfilled (vs. 20-24).

Furthermore, since God is the potter in relation to the scheme of redemption, it was His prerogative to design a plan that would save both Jew and Gentile alike. Again, since He is the potter, it was His prerogative to elect whom He willed, to have compassion on whom He willed, to show mercy on whom He willed in executing this plan.

Right here a very important point must be observed! Otherwise Calvinism must be true. Of all the elections God made in Romans nine, not one was unto salvation or damnation. The elections had nothing to do with their personal salvation. Jacob was elected over Esau (vs. 10-13) to be a vessel unto honor in that he was to stand in the honored lineage through which Christ was to come. After this election, both Jacob and Esau were

still responsible for their salvation or damnation.

Pharaoh was elected to a position of power and widely extended influence that through him God's power and name might be declared throughout all the earth. After this election, Pharaoh was still free to obey or disobey. God did not ordain him to do evil. Had he obeyed, God's name would have been honored among all nations through the news that Pharaoh had humbled himself before the God of Israel. However, he chose to disobey, and God showed His power anyway, and through him declared His name throughout all the earth.

True, God hardened his heart, but the Bible also says that Pharaoh hardened his own heart (Cf. Rom. 9:17, 18; Ex. 7:3; (:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:8; 8:15, 32; 9:34). God hardened his heart by multiplying his opportunities to obey. Each time Pharaoh disobeyed it was easier to do so the next time. Thus, he hardened his own heart. In this way God hardens people's heart today. Each failure in the presence of an opportunity to obey sears one's conscience to some degree (Cf. 1 Tim. 4:2). Pioneer preachers often referred to such as "gospel hardened." However, the verse in question (v. 17) shows that Pharaoh was elected of God to be the one through whom His name was to be declared throughout the earth.

Again, Paul refers to vessels unto honor, saying: "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim. 2:21). This verse shows that whether or not one is a vessel unto honor depends, in the final analysis, upon man. God's part is certain . . . "he shall be a vessel unto honour." This, however, so far as the salvation of his soul is concerned, is conditional. Paul says, "If a man purge himself. . ." As the clay must yield to the touch of the potters hand, so man must yield to God's will.

The thrust of the ninth chapter of Romans is to show the divine prerogative of God to suffer long with the nation of Israel in order to execute His scheme of redemption; to cut them off as a nation after His divine purpose had been served; to include the Gentiles in this plan, and to save both Jew and Gentile individually upon the same basis. Furthermore, we have no right to criticize Him as the divine potter in electing whom He willed in executing the plan. Remember, the personal salvation of those elected in Romans nine is not the point at issue.

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"HE WAS SENT UP....TO THE 'BIG HOUSE'!"

**Luther W. Martin
707 Salem Ave.
Rolla, MO 65401**

It is presumed that you understand what is meant when people currently remark that "So and so was 'sent up' to the 'Big House'"! The statement is being made that someone has been sent to prison...."the Big House" being a metaphor for the prison or imprisonment.

Centuries ago, long before the time of Christ our Savior, the Egyptians had occasion to make reference to the residence of their ruler, they spoke of "PAR-O", meaning "the Great House". "PAR-O" at first referred to the large structure in which the ruler was housed....a palace, if you will, but gradually, "PAR-O" came to refer to the entire Court of Egypt. The word may also have been related in their thinking to "PH", which was an article in their speech, and then, added to "PH" was their word for their God, "RA", the sun-god.

It is within the memory of many people living today, that Hirohito of Japan, was considered to be a Divine Ruler by the Japanese, at the time of the attack upon Pearl Harbor in 1941. So it was in ancient times that the Egyptians looked upon their rulers as gods or demi-gods. So, the Egyptian word for the "Great House" gradually came to be applied to the Ruler himself.... "PAR-O" changed to "PHAR-O", and finally spelled in English, PHARAOH. The Coptic word, OURO, meant "king", so PH-RA-OURO, literally meant "The Sun King".

In later centuries, in the time of the Old Testament record of the Children of Israel, in bondage to Egypt, the word "Pharaoh" was ultimately applied to at least ten different rulers of Egypt.

1. Pharaoh, in the time of Abraham (Genesis 12:15).
2. Pharaoh, of Joseph's time (Genesis 41st Chapter).
3. Pharaoh, the new king who knew not Joseph (Exodus 1:8).
4. Pharaoh, before whom Moses worked miracles (Exodus 5:1).
5. Pharaoh, who gave his queen's sister in marriage to Hadad (1 Kings 11:18-20).
6. Pharaoh, whose daughter, Bithiah married Mered, a descendant of Judah (1 Chronicles 4:18).
7. Pharaoh, whose daughter Solomon married (1 Kings 3:1; 6:37-38; 9:16).
8. Pharaoh, in whom King Hezekiah placed confidence (2 Kings 18:21).
9. Pharaoh-Necho, against whom Josiah King of Judah fought and was slain (2 Chron. 35:20-24; 2 Kings 23:29-30 & 24:7).
10. Pharaoh-Hophra (Jer. 37:5-8; Ezek. 17:11-13).

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

"... They rehearsed all that God had done with them..."—Acts 14:27

Send all News Items to: Wilson Adams, 317 Trinkle Ave., N.E., Roanoke, VA 24012

TWO NEW FAITHFUL CONGREGATIONS

KEITH SHARP, 1800 Harriston Ave., Conway, AR 72032. It is truly a cause for rejoicing when a group of God's people take a stand for the truth after having been in error or when a congregation is started which stands for the truth. This article will report on one of each.

DRY PRONG, LA

September 14-18, 1981, I preached in Dry Prong. This village is in central Louisiana, twenty-two miles north of Alexandria, on U.S. highway 167. Until recently there was no sound church in this area. Several years ago Brother and Sister Bud Grimes, who are now members in Conway, lived in Pineville, LA. In search of a faithful congregation with which to worship, they visited Dry Prong. The congregation was not sound, but some were willing to study. The Grimes began meeting in their home, along with R. F. Knight, a member at Dry Prong. Brother Knight learned the truth concerning the organization and work of the church. Later Brother Knight studied with the members at Dry Prong. The entire church subsequently has taken a stand for the truth. When I preached at Dry Prong I found a congregation hungering for the truth and determined to stand for it. They have only about a dozen members. The building is located on the north edge of town on the west side of highway 167. They can be contacted by writing R. F. Knight at Rt. 1, Box 69, Bentley, LA 71407.

HEBER SPRINGS, AR

September 21-25, 1981 I preached in the Spring Park Amphitheatre in Heber Springs, AR. At the time there was no faithful congregation in this beautiful Ozark town. Several families worked intensely to prepare for a successful attempt to begin a new congregation. Brother Rick Gilreath paid for hand bill and radio advertisements and taped the radio spots himself, along with Brother Tim Haile. Brother Gilreath made the announcements, kept a list of visitors from the community and lead the singing throughout the week. Several families devoted time and labor to go door to door passing out hand bills and many drove long distances to be there each night. This was despite the cool nights and dim lights in out of doors. As a result, a band of Christians standing for the New Testament order now meet in Heber Springs. They are known as the Eighth and Scott Streets church of Christ and meet in the Senior Citizens Center at the corner of Eighth and Scott Street in Heber Springs. This is one block off highway 25 south, immediately west of the National Guard Armory. Sunday assemblies are at 11:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. with classes at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday Bible study is at 7:00 p.m. The preacher is Rick Gilreath of Bald Knob. You may contact these brethren through Brother Gilreath at P.O. Box 256, Bald Knob, AR 72010. Or phone (501) 724-5137. It is truly a joy that I am able to make these reports. Worship with these brethren when in either of these areas.

FROM THE FIELD

JOHN HUMPRHIES, 5017 Bardstown Rd., Louisville, KY 40291. Bill Beasley and I just completed our second India effort together (Bill's third trip and my fifth). We had to change the time of departure three times! Conditions in India caused the changes, Bill and I agree that this was the best effort yet that we have had. We believe that much good was accomplished, and the churches with which we are working appear to be growing spiritually.

We had classes in English with churches and also classes with preachers. We taped our classes (51 tapes of 90 minutes each) and left the tapes (along with tape recorders) for the brethren to use after our leaving. We also had outlines and charts for the brethren with many tracts as well. Some of the Indian brethren are in

education and thus appreciate these tools and methods.

Brother Beasley presented lessons on 2 Peter and a series of studies on love. Bill put a lot of hard work into the lessons and outlines, and I believe much good will come of his efforts. I presented lessons on the Old Testament in general and then on a study of the prophets in particular: finishing that series with a study of Daniel. The second series that was presented was a study of Colossians and Ephesians. Bill brought some prepared tapes on the Lord's church: history, organization, work, and the various issues of the day.

We continue, as on the last trip, to work mostly with the brethren and encourage them to undertake "evangelistic" work. They are converting people to Christ and several new congregations are in existence since our last visit in 1980. Some of these churches are trying to support the preachers working with them. Bill and I are thrilled at this evidence of maturing faith in India.

Brethren, thank you so much for your prayers and support. We couldn't do the work without your help in these areas. Bill and I managed to stay fairly healthy this time. Only minor problems with stomachs and a little back ache (from sleeping on a board bed with a one inch thick mattress). Please continue to pray for our brethren in India.

PETER MCPHERSON, Box 254, Airdrie, Alberta, Canada TOM 0B0. Brother Connie asked me to send Wilson a report of the work here in Airdrie, Alberta. He was happy to hear that I was "back on the firing line" as a preacher. Believe me I have been on "the firing line" all along! Only for a short time I was preaching and "tent-making." Now my wife Judy and our youngest daughter (Dawn Eve, age 9) have begun another "full-time" preaching "call" (Acts 16:9-10). We are hoping to be able to receive adequate support in order to be able to give ourselves wholly to gospel work. I am just a little short of total support. I will need about \$500 more a month. It is simply impossible to live here, in even the modest priced accommodations, without having about \$2,300 a month support. If you can help we would be very grateful and strive to be worthy.

Airdrie is a town in its own right with some factories, etc., but it is also a bedroom community for the "fastest growing Canadian city," Calgary. (Perhaps even North America's fastest growing city). Airdrie is situated only 15 miles north of Calgary on Highway 2 which leads to Red Deer and then to Edmonton, the province's capital.

Eight families make up the Airdrie church. Some of them live some forty miles north-east. The church started here two years ago by some faithful members of the Hillhurst congregation in Calgary. This spring one was added to the Lord, but their growth has been slow. Hopefully, with the Lord's help, we can help to numerically increase this loyal band. There are now four conservative congregations in the province of Alberta. There is hardly anything truly "conservative" further west in British Columbia. There is Brother Morris Bailey and possibly a handful in Saskatchewan, nothing in Manitoba, a half dozen in Ontario and nothing further to the Atlantic. The liberals have a fair number of churches in B.C., three in Alberta, some in Saskatchewan, a good number in Manitoba and Ontario, possibly a couple in Quebec and, hardly anything in the Maritimes.

We have had a pretty good interest since my moving here in late August of this year, 1981. A gospel meeting was held here in July, just before our move, with Rod MacArthur. I helped in that meeting, along with a number of others, in canvassing the whole town, population nearing 10,000. And we had a few visitors to attend and made one contact that shows signs for obedience one day. Then in October I held a meeting in Acme where some of our members live and several contacts were made. One woman was contacted who had just recently been baptized and was attending

the liberal 38th St. church in Calgary. She is now attending regularly with us and is a real worker for the Lord. One aged woman was baptized and other studies have resulted from that meeting.

I am a preacher and not a prober (into other people's business and lives) but in as much as it was pointed out to me by one preacher and some members here that a certain family was probably involved in an unscriptural marriage, we had to deal with that shortly after we moved here. It seems sometimes that some of us have to do some of the "dirty work" that others should have done years ago.

Contacts are made by meeting people. So I have decided to meet as many people as I can. In a new work this is imperative. And in a small town this is somewhat easier. Though in a larger church the members should be making many of the contacts for the preacher (see Don R. Hastings report in the November issue of STS). One way to meet people is to set a goal of meeting five to ten new people each day. One salesman put ten beans in his coat pocket in the morning and would not go to bed at night until he was able to, one by one, put those beans into the pocket on the other side of his coat. Every time he met a new person he would put another bean in his other pocket. Simple but effective. Some of us need that kind of discipline in regard to the Lord's cause.

The local paper here gives all the "ministers" in town an opportunity to write an article every ten weeks or so. I have averaged better than that with three already. Some of them don't like to write so I take their turn for them! Also we run a little ad each week in the classified section. It goes like this: "WANTED . . . people to study the Bible. Anytime, anywhere." Then we give an address and phone number and we get one or two calls per week. I have a number of ideas for the new year. We will be pushing our Bible courses, doing some door to door canvassing, possibly some phone canvassing in bad weather, looking into the "door knob packets" that some are having success with.

The attendance runs between 15-30. The collection averages \$175. We only have a couple of wage earners. The church here had a reserve and was able to support me for six months at \$1,000 a month. After January the amount will be reduced to between \$500 and \$600 per month. That's about the story from here. Oh yes, please allow me to tell you that Judy and I are grandparents again. My daughter, Sherry Puterbaugh of Seattle, WA gave birth to another boy last week. And Tim, our 19 year old is in college in Lethbridge. For further information write to me at the address above. I surely want to thank all that responded to my pleas for support. Most were already committed but your answers were appreciated. And a special thanks to those churches that are and will be able to support us in '82.

FERNANDO VENEGAS, Casilla # 122 C.C., 5500 Mendoza, Argentina, South America. With great joy I report that we baptized one man after four months of studying with him. With the obedience of this brother our membership has increased to 15 brethren. At the present I have seven home studies going. Also we now have a blackboard in our meeting place and are presently working on making a baptistry. As you can see our work is blessed by our heavenly Father and we give Him thanks. **JERRAL R. KAY**, P.O. Box 834, Rapid City, SD 57709. The church that met on Line Road in Box Elder is now meeting in its new building in Rapid City. Rapid City has a population of 55,000. Two years ago the church became concerned about growth in the small community of Box Elder with only the Air Force base to draw from. We began to make plans to move and purchased 2 acres of land in a new subdivision in the southeast part of Rapid City. When the land was paid off we began to build and in July of this year we moved into our new facilities.

This church is in its sixth year of existence in a state that had no scriptural churches. Starting with two families in 1975, it has grown to an average attendance of 75-85 on Sundays. We hold two gospel meetings a year, and have different classes to edify the church as well.

From the information that we can get we are the second largest congregation in a five state area—Minnesota (St. Paul church is the largest), North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, and South Dakota (a small group is meeting in Sioux Falls). There are no sound churches meeting in Wyoming except for three Christians that meet in Saratoga, Wyoming (south-central).

I am so thankful for the wonderful saints here that are willing to sacrifice to see the church grow. Young families who were converted while in the military have stayed to help instead of returning home to other states. We work together as the family of God that we are, because there are no other churches to visit or associate with. The next nearest sound church is 400 miles away. We have averaged about 18 baptisms a year since coming here and this does not leave much free time. However I have enjoyed meetings with the church in St. Paul, MN; West Washington St., Indianapolis, IN; Saratoga, WY; and Peru, IN. Brother Ron Howes is leaving St. Paul after five years of preaching there and was able to come by and stay with us for a few days. He is moving to Arizona. If you are ever in the beautiful Black Hills or Badlands of South Dakota please visit with us at 1302 E. Fairmont Blvd. Phone (605) 348-8184. **HIRAM HUTTO**, 53 Idlewood, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401. The work here goes well. As you may know, Tuscaloosa is where the University of Alabama is located and as a result we have a number of young people from various places. They are very different from any I have ever worked with. They sit right up front, participate vigorously in all phases of the work: lead the singing, teach classes, preach, baptize people, etc. It's a real thrill to see it and be a part of it. We have about four young men who plan to preach.

CHURCHES RECONCILED

FORT COLLINS, CO—On November 1, 1981, the members of both the Downtown church of Christ and the Foothills church of Christ in Fort Collins began meeting together as one church. This was the result of favorable sentiment expressed on the part of all, and was brought to final action by unanimous consent of all concerned. The new church will hereafter be known as the Southwest church of Christ, and will meet in the building occupied by the former Foothills church. Johnnie Horton, minister of the former Downtown church, will serve the Southwest church in this capacity. Mailing address is P.O. Box 1418, Fort Collins, CO 80522-1418. Phone numbers are (303) 484-9838 and 226-0680.

AMUEL GARNER BELL 1912-1981

LEON GOFF, 3535 West Georgia, Phoenix, AZ 85019. My father-in-law passed from this life November the 6th. He was born in Mississippi, reared in Arkansas near Monette, married Ruby Simpkins in 1932, moved to California in the war years, where he lived until retiring to Mt. Pleasant, TX in 1977. He is survived by his wife, Ruby, two daughters, Mrs. Alma Goff of Glendale, AZ, and Mrs. Margaret Martinez of Lake Elsinore, CA, and by one son, James Garner of Mt. Pleasant, TX. He is also survived by two grandchildren, Derinda and Brian Goff, and by three brothers and three sisters.

Brother Bell had been a faithful Christian all of his adult life, and served as an elder for a number of years. He was an elder when the institutional controversy broke in the 1950's. He took a stand early against institutionalism. He stood alone in the eldership, which led to his resignation. He was an exemplary husband and father, a hard worker, and always helpful and considerate toward his family and others. I cannot imagine a better father-in-law. He has been much of an encouragement and support to me through the years. The memorial services were conducted in Mt. Pleasant, with Patrick Farish preaching. A good number of family, brethren, and friends were assembled for the service.

NEW CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

"WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES" is the title of a new eight lesson Bible Correspondence Course. For a free set write H. L. Bruce, 5108 Sherrill Dr., Amarillo, TX 79108.

PREACHERS NEEDED

YOUNGSTOWN, OH—The church here is looking for a full-time preacher. We will make the last payment on our building in December, 1981 and will become nearly self-supporting. If interested contact Robert Shreve at (216) 792-6405.

LEXINGTON, KY—Bro. J. F. Dancer will be leaving Liberty Road here in Lexington the first of the year. Bro. Dancer is moving to work with the Eastside church in Russellville, AL. His new address will be P.O. Box 446, Russellville, AL 35653. The church at Liberty

Road is fully self-supporting and also helps in the support of five other preachers. Any one interested should contact Harvey Baker (606) 299-5708, or Jerry Herndon 293-0741.

WOLF POINT, MT—The church in Wolf Point is looking for a preacher. We are a very small group and so would be able to provide only partial support. If interested contact Phil Stewart at 213 E. Indian St., Wolf Point, MT 59201.

ANCHORAGE AK—The church of Christ in Anchorage, AK is looking for someone to work with them as an evangelist. If interested please correspond with Calvin Hoggard, P. O. Box 1448, Anchorage, AK 99510. Please supply references.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

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RESTORATIONS 177

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

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