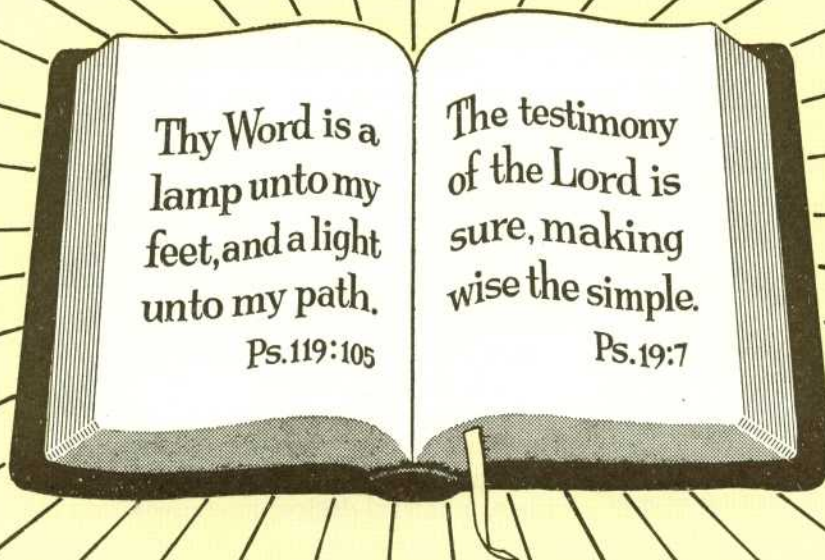


Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST



The Two Witnesses and Revelation II

The Upward Call

The Ransom of Christ

The Sabbath

Megiddo Message

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A religious magazine, devoted to the cause of Christ and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. The MEGIDDO MESSAGE will

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Editorially Speaking...

Idols In OUR Hearts

"HATH A NATION changed their gods, which are yet no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit" (Jer. 2:11). Does this pronouncement from the Mighty God of heaven against Israel hold any truth for us today? Are we in some measure guilty of their sin? Have we made us new gods and forsaken the one true God who led us out of spiritual Egypt and the darkness of superstition?

We may look with scorn upon the gods of heathen nations. We may despise the idols of wood or gold or stone in far-off lands of ignorance and wonder how any people could be so foolish as to bow down and worship them. But what about us? Are we worshipping idols of our own fashioning?

Webster's dictionary defines idolatry as "the worship of a physical object as a god, immoderate devotion." Idolatry, then, is undue devotion to unworthy objects. Thus it may be any pursuit in life on which we set our heart. The prophet Ezekiel warns against this dangerous human tendency: "Thus saith the Lord God, Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols, that I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols" (Ezek. 14:4, 5).

Pleasure-seeking may be idolatry, as may be a hobby, or a profession, or a business enterprise which monopolizes our attention. These are gods of our own creation. Evil imaginations, unlawful desires may creep into our minds so subtly and in such attractive guises that we hardly realize they are present until the idol is firmly established and we are bowing down to it in worship.

Do we realize that our most dangerous idol is self? Do we think of those good opinions of ourselves and our accomplishments as idols? What an idol we make of self when we think ourselves better than we really are!

Our God is a jealous God, and He will not take anything but first place in our affections. His promise is: "Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed" (I Sam. 2:30).

Are we not showing that we despise God when we allow a multitude of lesser interests to come into our lives and crowd out our interest in divine realities? Are we going to bow before the gods of modern-day Babylon in which we live and perish because of our lack of fidelity?

Let us remember that no idolater has any share in the Kingdom of God. ● ●

The Two Witnesses and Revelation 11

PRAYER

Merciful Father, Thou Giver of every good and perfect gift, once again we thank and praise Thee for Thy mercy and goodness, that our lives are spared and our day of salvation extended, giving us more time to walk in the way of Thy law and fit ourselves to be Thine eternal associates.

We thank Thee that Thy Word was preserved during the Dark Ages, and that we have it today in its ancient purity. We thank Thee for the glorious plan revealed in that Word, that in Thy own good time Thou wilt intercept the affairs of men and establish a new and better order here upon earth; that the sin, suffering and uncertainty of our present existence will be replaced by Thy Kingdom of peace, happiness, righteousness and assurance forever. Help us to become more and more absorbed with the thought of having a part in that great Plan, and to make the seeking of Thy Kingdom the first and foremost quest of our lives.

Help us never to be satisfied with ourselves as we are, but may we ever strive for greater heights in the divine life. Thou art a God of progression, and if constantly our hands are becoming cleaner and our hearts purer, we cannot fail to grow stronger and stronger to run the way of Thy commandments.

May we search our own hearts with meticulous honesty. May we look into the perfect "law of liberty," and having seen self in its true light may we not go our way and straightway forget what we are, but may we work diligently with self until every stain is removed. Help us never to enter into temptation but flee from it, realizing the weakness of our flesh.

Give us a stronger faith, more willingness of mind, a greater determination to make a full surrender. May we have such implicit confidence in Thy leading that whatever overtakes us, whether trials or blessings, we can always say, Thy will be done. And may we always live as in the presence of Thine angel that we may share together the glories of Thy Kingdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.

DISCOURSE

REVELATION IS a book of symbols, pictures, imagery, representations. Into a few short chapters the Seer of Patmos compresses prophecy for centuries to come. And through it all He sees the Divine Hand working steadily, working marvelously toward the completion of a perfect plan, the ordering of a new world in righteousness.

One segment of this magnificent plan is pictured in vivid symbolisms in Revelation 11. The Revelator wrote of a temple, olive trees, prophecy, and two witnesses—their death, resurrection and ascension; of a kingdom ultimately triumphant and eternal. What does it all mean? What did the author intend to convey to the nearby churches whom he knew would read this message? What about those down in these last days who would ponder the imagery of his words?

Revelation being a book of symbols, we must expect our conclusions to include more probabilities than absolutes; more kaleidoscopic patterns that must be seen as a whole, than allegories that may be pressed for detail.

In our study we shall let the Scriptures speak for themselves. And if we take care to rest all our conclusions on the primary testimony of divine Scripture, we shall be able to see a Bible harmony in the main tenor that will confirm our faith, animate our devotion, augment our reverence for God's Holy Word, and stir us to more carefully study and obey it. This accomplished, our probabilities should prove themselves worthwhile.

Concerning Revelation 11 and the two witnesses, many men have many thoughts. We shall approach the problem of the two witnesses not as two individuals, but as a symbol of the Bible itself, and its faithful human supporters; the three and a half days as a period of years; the death of the two witnesses as a general apostasy from the true religion; and their ascension to heaven as symbolic of the ascension of Christ and His saints to political power.

To be truly a revelation, the book of Revelation must foretell or reveal future events. However, nearly two thousand years intervene between us and the time of its writing; hence, all prophecies recorded in Revelation need not be still future, or even present. One such prophecy already fulfilled concerns the Apostasy.

The Apostasy Foretold

More than one of the Biblical writers foretell a decisive interruption in the workings of God with men, a period of complete departure from true religion, a season when God's truth and its sponsors would be silenced.

The prophet Daniel foretold this time, foreseeing in vision a great power that should arise and "speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." This same power would "cast down the truth to the ground," and practice and prosper (Dan. 7:25; 8:12).

Jesus pictured this same period of time in His parable of the Ten Virgins: "And while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept" (Matt. 25:5). When the powers of darkness had succeeded in silencing or putting to death the last of the saints, all who kept the commandments of God, they had accomplished their dire intent of casting the truth to the ground; and the virgins, those who set out to welcome the bridegroom on His return, fell asleep. Note that it says they *all* slumbered and slept. No one was awake to proclaim the life-giving truths of God's Word.

The apostle Paul also foretold this condition: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:2-4). What the Apostle here termed a turning away from truth to fables he calls a "falling away" from the truth in II Thessalonians 2.

Mosheim, the church historian, states in plain English that "during the seventh century true religion lay buried under a senseless mass of super-

stitions, and was unable to raise her head." This noted historian gives data of the third, fourth, fifth and sixth centuries after Christ, showing the corruptness of the clergy, and how gradually the people all departed from the precepts of the great Teacher, Jesus.

Likewise, H. G. Wells, author of *Outline of History*, tells us that the gospel as preached in the popular churches of the world is in exact opposition to that which was believed and proclaimed by Jesus and the apostles. Numerous histories attest to the fulfillment of the Scriptural forecast of an apostasy from true religion, as mankind slowly turned away from the teachings of Jesus and absorbed the philosophies and practices of paganism.

With these thoughts in mind let us proceed into our study of Revelation 11, seeking for Bible harmony, not contradiction; Divine clarity and purpose, not man-conceived confusion and perplexity. Let us see if the sacred prophecy of the Apostasy does not harmonize admirably with the prophetic imagery of the Revelator in Revelation 11.

Measure the Temple

The Revelator opens this eleventh chapter with a command from the angel. "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months" (vs. 1, 2).

A "temple" need not be an actual building or sanctuary. By the temple we may logically understand that which the ancient temple always prefigured: the Church of God in its high spiritual sense; the living community of believing men and women. God's people are His temple: "for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are," wrote Paul to the Church at Corinth. And to the Ephesians he said, "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord" (I Cor. 3:17; Eph. 2:21).

Likewise a city need not be an urban collection of homes, places of business, expressways, avenues and parks. Jesus in His first recorded sermon addressed true believers as "the light of the world, a city that is set on a hill." We learn from Isaiah that the faithful of future ages are to be called "the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel" (Matt. 5:14; Isa. 60:14).

The "temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein" (Rev. 11:1) recognizes the indelible consecration of God's true servants, men and women who worship God "in spirit and in

The Bible foretells a long night of spiritual darkness, a time of total departure from true religion.

truth." They are the true Israel of God, the inner temple, Jews indeed, in whom is no guile (Rom. 2: 28, 29).

The command of the angel is to measure them—God is evaluating the quality and depth of these worshipers. True to reality, the Revelator divides the worshipers into two classes: those who are sincere, and those whose worship is superficial. There is the temple, or the inner sanctuary, the Holy of Holies; also the outer court, which is not to be measured, an area given "unto the Gentiles," men not of the faith, not Christians in heart and life.

The shrine is to be measured; the court is to be left out—a picture of the separation which must always exist between worshipers of devotion and self-dedication, and that profession which is without grace or spiritual vitality.

"And the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months" (v. 2b). Here is our first suggestion of a time when God's true people shall be subdued, or trodden under foot, by a hostile world. The "holy city," the city of the living God, the city of true believers, those professing and living by the true teachings of Jesus Christ, were to be totally suppressed, trodden underfoot.

A Period of Time

How long was the holy city to continue in this trodden-down condition? The Revelator suggests a specific interval of time: "forty and two months." Five separate chapters in the Bible specify the duration of this period of darkness: Daniel, chapters 7 and 12; and Revelation, chapters 11, 12 and 13. It is the "time and times and the dividing of time" of Dan. 7:25; the "time, times and a half" of Dan. 12:7; the "time, and times, and half a time" of Rev. 12:14; the "forty and two months" of Rev. 11:2 and 13:5; and the "thousand two hundred and threescore days" of Rev. 11:3 and 12:6; and the "three days and an half" of Rev. 11:9, 11. Is it possible that all these refer to the same period of time?

To unveil this enigma let us assume that a "time" equals one year. On that basis, "times" could be two years, and the "dividing of time," one half year, which would aggregate three and one half years. If this assumption is correct, the two periods specified by Daniel are equal to that of Rev. 12:14. But if our knowledge of this mathematical problem were confined to these statements alone, it would be difficult to prove our assumption correct.

However, Revelation forecasts the same period using more specific time units: "three days and a half"; "forty and two months"; "a thousand two hundred and three score days." Obviously the "forty and two months" and the "thousand two hundred

The two witnesses are symbols of the whole system of divine truth, preserved by God, made available to the world by living witnesses.

and three score days" are identical, and careful analysis will reveal that the other periods cover the same time.

The reading of Rev. 11:9, 11, as translated in the KJV is "three days and a half"; however, according to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, the original word for "days," *hemera*, may mean "years" when used figuratively (*hemera* is rendered "years" in Luke 1:7, 18). Thus we again have "three and a half years."

Students of prophecy agree that in Scripture, prophetic periods are figured from the basis of a thirty-day month, a 360-day year (Gen. 7:11; 8:4; 7:24). Hence, forty-two 30-day months would equal 1260 days.

Thus each of the foregoing periods represents 1260 days. In two instances in the Bible we are commanded to count a year for a day. The first is in Num. 14:34, where ten of the spies brought back an evil report of the land they had searched. The children of Israel were to wander in the wilderness a year for each day they searched the land, even forty years. The second instance where this rule was employed is Ezek. 4:6, "...and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year"; or as translated by Dr. Moffatt, "a day for a year I assign you." Applying this rule to the 1260 days, we have 1260 years.

Two Witnesses Prophecy

The Revelator continues: "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth" (11:3).

Let us first consider the usage of the term "prophecy." To prophesy, as used in Scripture, does not necessarily mean "to predict." It may mean teaching, telling forth, as well as foretelling. It is speaking God's words for God, in the name and by the authority of God. It is delivering God's message, whether of rebuke or of encouragement, of admonition or of prediction.

Who are the two witnesses? Some interpreters suppose them to be two persons, such as Enoch and Elias, or Moses and Elias.

Sponsors of the theory of the two witnesses being literally two men feel they have supporting

Divine in dignity, universal in duration and extent, the prophecy of the two witnesses aims higher and reaches further than the existence of any child of man.

factors in the following verses: "If any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy [a definite allusion to the time of Elijah]: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will [an allusion to Moses]" (vs. 5, 6). But the application is not wholly consistent. If the men are literal, their power must likewise be literally fulfilled; and can we imagine human beings with live flames spurting from their mouths?

No, the prophecy of the two witnesses aims higher and reaches further than the person and existence of any child of man. It is in dignity, divine; universal in duration and extent. Neither Moses and Elijah, nor Elijah and Elisha, nor Enoch and Elijah can exhaust the significance of the two witnesses who prophesy through the whole period of Gentile domination.

Two Olive Trees

In verse 4, the Revelator gives a suggestion as to the identity of these two witnesses. He says, "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." The meaning of the candlesticks and the olive trees of Zechariah is implied again in the two witnesses. Therefore our next question is, What are the olive trees and candlesticks?

The simile is suggested by Zechariah's vision (Zechariah 4). The Prophet saw in vision a candlestick all of gold, seven lamps with seven golden pipes supplying the lamps with the golden oil, and two olive trees which were providing the oil.

The question was asked: "What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?" (v. 12). The description is fraught with meaning. These two olive branches empty the golden oil out of *themselves*. They contain the oil of divine truth. Can the symbol represent anything less than the entire Scriptures of truth, and the human witnesses proclaiming that truth (remember it takes

the Word of God and its sponsors to form the two witnesses)?

The emphatic feature of the symbolism is the deep underlying significance. It is representing the whole system of divine truth, preserved by divine care, and made available to the world through divinely instructed witnesses.

How glorious the description of the office of earthly witnesses—channels of grace, concentrations of light. Woe to the witnesses who forget their office of channelling the oil that feeds the lamps, of shining brightly in a darkened world!

The Church, we might say, is illumined by the two Testaments, which pour forth the oil of gladness and minister the food of light. Like them the Church is to be of pure gold; like them, she is to be firmly set on a solid basis in the presence of God, extending her branches, diffusing her light. Her thoughts must all be upward. Her light must aspire to heaven. Her feet must be on the rock; her heart among the stars.

Let us also observe that, like the seven-branched candlestick, the Church has no light in herself. She can do nothing without the Olive trees which supply the oil, the inspired Scriptures of God's Word.

Returning now to Revelation 11, let us notice the transition: from the measuring reed to the two witnesses and the olive trees (vs. 1, 3). The two Testaments contain all things necessary for salvation; they constitute the rule or Canon of Scripture; they are the measuring Reed of the Church. But the Lord does not enlighten the world with the Testaments alone; He must have human agents, men and women who promote and practice and live by the oil of divine truth.

The situation is identical with that of the Two Witnesses. It is a case of a light and a lightstand; an olive tree and the channel for the oil. Jesus said to His loyal followers, "Ye are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14).

Clothed in Sackcloth

Revelation 11:3 specifies that during a certain time the two witnesses shall be clothed in "sackcloth." What is the significance of this?

Sackcloth as used in the Bible frequently suggests a state of distress, anguish, mourning, lament. The witnesses, the written Testaments of the Word of God, do indeed prophesy during this period of darkness, this interval of 1260 years, but they are clothed in "sackcloth," garments of distress and mourning. The apostasy is for the time supreme—"they all slumbered and slept" (Matt. 25:5)—while everything beautiful and sacred and beneficent in Christianity is as if clad in the sackcloth of humil-

iation and lament; in the language of the ancient prophet, there are none to stand upon the Lord's side. It is a time when the triumph of evil seems complete. It is the deeper gloom that precedes the dawn. The powers of darkness triumph.

The witness of the Church, borne either by loyal adherents or by the written and preserved testimony of their words, is continuous through all the ages from the beginning of God's workings with men. God's purpose can suffer no defeat, whatever men may do. The period of prophecy lasts through the 1260 days (or years) of the triumph of heathendom in the sense that God preserves His Word in a clothed, sackcloth-covered state, while paganism prevails.

We who live beyond the termination of this period of darkness, and labor to understand the deep symbols of Revelation might sometimes be tempted to wish that the facts had been stated in plainer, less figurative language. But with the history of that era behind us, we can better recognize the depths of those symbols as manifestations of God's foresight and goodness to us. During the Apostasy, the Bible was preserved in the hands of its worst enemies. And had it not been for the dark sackcloth which covered it, the instigators of the sinister movement would surely have dispensed entirely with the Sacred Volume. But, being ignorant of its actual content, and assuming Revelation to be a mystery, they preserved the Book painstakingly and flawlessly—for us!

Witnesses With Power

What is the significance of the divine power which these two witnesses have at their command, as described in verses 5 and 6: "And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy"?

These samples of the power of the witnesses are borrowed from the history of the past and transferred into the region of the future. The power which is in the witnesses is God's power; therefore it is infinite; and there, if He wills, He can make its application in any form He chooses, silently or openly, yet with results equally marvelous.

We must understand these illustrations as symbolic, merely a part of the imagery of the whole, founded on the record of God's vindications of His servants in ancient times. The Revelator is simply presenting the truth that His servants have God on their side, who defends them in every needful way.

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A similar illustration occurs in the words of the Lord to the incumbent prophet Jeremiah: "Because ye speak this word, behold I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them" (5:14). We should also remember Jesus' own words of promise: "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you" (Luke 10:19). This is the same guardian care which God used to preserve His written Word through the long night of the Apostasy. The imagery in the Apocalyptic promise simply presents in a vivid way this same truth.

Continued Next Issue

From A Reader—

"Paper Bonfire" Christians?

In our local newspaper I read the following article:

"'A paper bonfire makes a lovely blaze,' our four-year-old told me as he helped his older brother burn the rubbish, 'but it doesn't keep you warm for long.'"

"I couldn't help thinking how aptly this applies to some of us. Are we 'paper bonfire' Christians? It is easy to be 'set alight' as we worship and sing hymns with others, but how long does the light-blaze last? The kind of Christianity which flickers and goes out when met by the challenges of everyday life does not amount to much.

"The warmth of heart we experience on Sundays must go deeper than a mere response of the emotions to good fellowship and stirring words. The fellowship must be shared with others and the words turned into action if the warmth is to spread and grow. For the folk whose Sunday worship extends through the week like this, every day is a holy day.

"We need more Christians who will 'take God with them to their home' instead of leaving Him at the church door; only then can the cold, dark places of this world be filled with warmth and light."

I thought, how true to life this article is. How long does our blaze last? Is ours a paper bonfire, or genuine hard wood?

Mrs. W. L. S.

It's better to be great in your littleness than to be little in your greatness.

The Upward Call



SCENE II

In the first scene of the drama, we looked in upon a casual group of travelers at Milo's Tavern, on the Appian Way. This is at the town of Tres Tabernae, or Three Taverns, where PAUL was met by brethren on his first journey to Rome. It is a stormy night.

A sea captain, a Greek contractor, a Roman salesman, a centurion, the landlord, and the porter talk of the storm raging outside, which leads to reminiscences of the voyage in which PAUL was wrecked on Malta, our captain having been master of that ill-fated ship. Inevitably there follows a brisk discussion of the personality of PAUL and the Christian movement in general.

Rumor has it that the Apostle has been released after two years' house arrest. There is also a more ominous report that the Emperor Nero is about to move against the Christians, making them the scapegoat for the recent disastrous fire in Rome.

In Scene II there is a flashback of six months, and we see the great missionary "in his own hired house," guarded by a soldier, who sits in a corner, uncomprehending and silent. PAUL wears a light

chain attached to his wrists. The furnishings are simple: a table, chairs, and a lampstand.

PAUL, his hair and beard now quite gray, is seated across the table from LUCIUS, a richly-dressed young Roman patrician, a convert to the Way. The young man's face is serious, even sad; the two men are in earnest conversation. The problem is

Ambition and Personal Sacrifice

PAUL. You ran well for a season, Lucius; what is the hindrance now?

LUCIUS. It is just this, Sir: the Way is narrow, but I expected that. It contains discipline, but as a Roman I can take that and welcome it. But it also calls for a great deal of sacrifice.

PAUL. Can you not also make that? It is only a matter of exchanging the poorer for the better.

LUCIUS. I know we are supposed to look at it that way, but is it? Try as I will, I can't avoid the question: Is it really worth it?

PAUL. [*Quickly, with deep conviction*] It is worth anything, if we look to the end. What is it you find so difficult to give up, my son?

LUCIUS. It is the things I have—or can have... and that is where it hurts. A man can willingly give up the things he does not have and is not likely to have. The poor can renounce money, but I have it. The unpopular can give up the friends they do not have, but I have hosts of them—or did have until I became a Christian. The incapable and uneducated can easily turn their backs on ambition, but I have education, I have talent, I know I can make money. I have been offered a government post which has a brilliant future, if I will conform to the State religion at least outwardly. The obscure have no such problems. The old can resist the lure of opportunity, for their lives are behind them, but I am young; everything is ahead of me.

PAUL. In other words, you figure that this thing hits you harder than it does most people.

LUCIUS. Well, to be truthful, yes.

PAUL. Look, Lucius, whatever you do, don't ever start feeling sorry for yourself. It's the very worst thing you can do. Now I don't blame you for counting the cost. That is just what our Lord told us to do. But don't get the idea that you are being charged a higher price just because you have it. You don't know the other man's problems and the sacrifices he makes. Where much is given, much is required, and where little is given, little is required; but it all adds up to the same total—your all. The poor widow who cast in her two mites made more of a sacrifice than the rich who kept something for themselves, for she gave all she had. Much or little, the Way calls for a full surrender, a complete sacrifice. It's a challenge. If you can't go through with it, don't start. I thought you were man enough to measure up to the task, Lucius; don't make me mistaken.

LUCIUS. But what do we get in return?

PAUL. The disciples asked that question, and you remember what Jesus answered?

LUCIUS. Yes . . . a hundredfold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting. But that was spoken to fishermen and peasants, men who had nothing—no possessions and no prospects.

PAUL. That's what *you* think. Remember what I told you, that all things are relative. It was their all they left, and though it was little it was as precious to them as your all is to you.

Now let's look at your problems one by one. You have money. That's good, if you make the right use of it. Money brings its own problems. To many—and you have known them—it has been a curse. I, too, came from a well-to-do family, and for my change of heart I was disinherited. Yet I survived the blow, and have managed to make a living with my hands, which wouldn't hurt you if you had to do it. And I also learned the lesson to give money its proper place in life, but no more. There are many things it cannot give, as you will learn to your sorrow as you grow older, if you put your trust in it.

You have talent and ability. That is good. The church needs you. Is it not better to burn yourself out in such a Cause as this than to waste your talents in the vain pursuit of pleasure and worldly honor, which so soon pass away? Is it not better to live for Christ and for others—

LUCIUS. [*reverently*] As you are doing.

PAUL. [*with rapt enthusiasm*] As I find my highest pleasure in doing, or striving to do! To me, the Christian life has been more than rewarding. I wouldn't for the world go back to the old, selfish way of life if I could . . . and I could. I could compromise and perhaps gain my freedom, but what would I gain in the long run?

You have had popularity, and could have it again;

but what is more fickle than popularity? I know it exhilarates the old man and feeds the vanity, but how long does it last? Who has more popularity than Nero's favorites, but where are they? Who is the favorite of today? Who of yesterday? They change so fast one can hardly learn their names before they are gone. Is that the kind of popularity you crave? For my part, I prefer the approval of God and of Jesus Christ and the angels, and the fellowship of God's children on earth.

You have position. So had I. I was an honor student under the great Rabban Gamaliel. That doesn't mean anything to you, but to a Jew it does. I was in line for a seat in the Sanhedrin, the highest council of the Jews. My prospects were bright. I was already a leader of the most radical and violent faction of the Pharisees, so violent that I persecuted the Church of Christ. But when I saw my awful mistake, I turned my back on it all and became in their eyes as the offscouring of all creation. Why? Because I believed that Christ would give me much more, far higher honors, honors that will be everlasting. The new prospect was so far ahead of the old that I chose the better.

LUCIUS. I wish I could have some of your faith.

PAUL. I much more, Lucius. I wish I could give it to you, but every man must develop his own faith and work out his own salvation. I can only point you to the evidence.

You have youth. So had I. I was young when I entered the Way, and I praise God for the early start I made. He has done so much for me, my only regret is that I have only one lifetime to give Him. But you will find, as I have, that youth will not last. It gets away with breathless speed, and then where are you? What have you done with the years? Have you been just a successful Roman, or have you built a noble character worthy of being carried over into the world to come?

LUCIUS. [*rising*] But I also have my people to think of. I shrink from hurting them. The family name, and all that sort of thing, you know. Ours is a proud family.

PAUL. I had the same problem, perhaps even more so, for nowhere is the family tie and family pride stronger than among the Jews. But consider, as I did. This is a matter of life and death—for us, personally and individually. It is every man for himself. When death comes, to them or to you, what can your people do for you? Can they give you life beyond the grave? Can they give you eternal health and happiness?

LUCIUS. [*thoughtfully*] I see. It seems to be all a matter of present or future values.

PAUL. Exactly. According to your faith, be it un-
(Continued on page 12)

THE RANSOM of Christ is a doctrine so universally accepted that few people question its verity. But is it a Bible teaching? Did Christ actually die for us and pay the penalty in our stead?

In a work entitled *Things In Which It is Impossible for God to Lie*, copyright in 1965 by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., chapter 10, "How Could One Man Die for the World of Mankind?" the following points are made:

1) *Because of Adam's sin, all mankind were dying, that is, paying the penalty of sin because "the wages of sin is death."*

2) *In order for this sin and consequent death to be taken away, there had to be a death, a paying of penalty by the death of an innocent victim.*

3) *God insists on absolute justice—the offering has to be right—"life for life, eye for eye."*

4) *God accepts no sacrifice short of blood—"without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins."*

5) *An individual sacrifice for sin is not required of everyone because God through His kindness provided a ransom.*

6) *No human creature deriving his life from Adam could be the ransom for sin. Christ being the Son of God was not defiled through Adam, hence could provide an acceptable ransom.*

7) *Christ paid the right price. He was humanly perfect, just as was Adam before he sinned. Thus He was able to provide exactly the right price to correspond in value to what Adam had lost.*

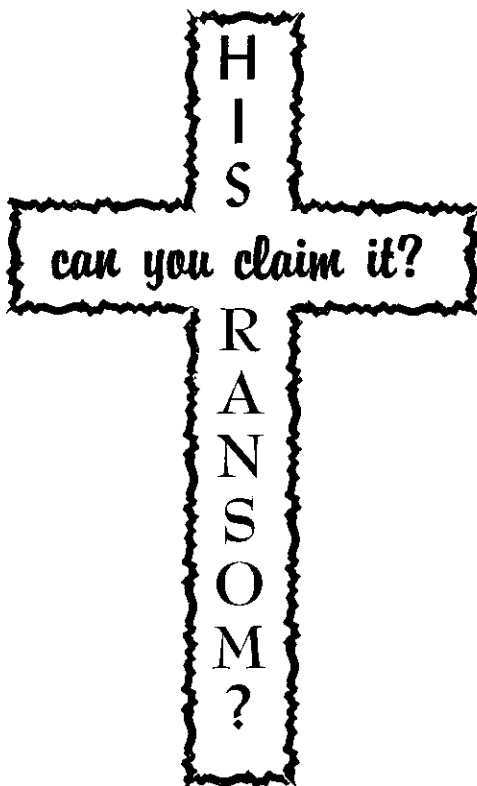
8) *Just as Adam's sin condemned all his unborn posterity, so Christ's ransoming sacrifice redeemed all when He died innocently as a perfect human sacrifice.*

9) *Christ's ransom opened the way for mankind to gain life everlasting in perfection.*

The foregoing build-up may seem to make some semblance of sense out of an otherwise senseless theory. However, let us compare these statements with the unerring Word of God.

Point 1: Because of Adam's sin, all mankind were dying, that is, paying the penalty of sin because "the wages of sin is death."

No, Adam died natural death because he was mortal. Adam was a man (see Gen. 2; I Cor. 15:



45), and man by nature is mortal (Job 4:17). There is no indication that Adam was deathless before he sinned, or that his physical death was the result of his transgression. Physical death is not the "wages of sin." Neither is the death to which all mankind are heir the wages of sin. Physical death is the result of the mortal state of man.

Point 2: In order for this sin and consequent death to be taken away, there had to be a death, a paying of penalty by the death of an innocent victim.

Not so! That belief is only a relic of paganism. "God's sacrifice is a soul with its evil crushed: a heart broken with penitence, O God, never wilt thou depise" (Ps. 51:17, Moffatt Bible). "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our

God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:7).

Point 3: God insists on absolute justice—the offering has to be right—"life for life, eye for eye."

God never demanded the sacrifice of His Son. He abominated human sacrifice, and surely He would not stoop to it Himself. Furthermore, the Mosaic principle of "life for life, eye for eye" was superseded by Christ's superior law. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil" (Matt. 5:38, 39). Why, then, should God reestablish a law which had been done away by requiring the life of His innocent Son? Paul repeated the principle of Christ's teaching when he wrote, "Recompense to no man evil for evil"; and again, "See that none render evil for evil unto any man" (Rom. 12:17; I Thess. 5:15). Would God practice what He had forbidden men to do?

Point 4: God accepts no sacrifice short of blood—"without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins."

The statement is true, but the blood is not physical blood. The only death in which God delights is the death to sin, the crucifixion of man's sinful nature. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Ps. 116:15). "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the

new moons and the sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity; even the solemn meeting. . . . And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood" (Isa. 1:13, 15). God is not interested in the sacrifice of literal blood; He wants the broken and contrite heart (Isa. 66:2; Ps. 51:17).

Point 5: An individual sacrifice for sin is not required of everyone because God through His kindness provided a ransom.

One hundred percent wrong! Said Paul, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Rom. 12:1—3). This sacrifice is demanded of every member of Christ's body or Church.

Point 6: No human creature deriving his life from Adam could be the ransom for sin. Christ being the Son of God was not defiled through Adam, hence could provide an acceptable ransom.

This statement presupposes "original sin," a position not provable by the Bible. Christ was the Son of God, made in all points like His brethren, yet without sin (Deut. 18:15, 18; Heb. 4:15). His virgin mother was a human descendant of Adam (see Luke 3), hence He also was the same. He was "of the seed of David" (Acts 2:30), who was descended from Adam. The above statement is groundless.

Point 7: Christ paid the right price. He was humanly perfect, just as was Adam before he sinned. Thus He was able to provide exactly the right price to correspond in value to what Adam had lost.

There is no proof of the "fall" in the Word of God, or that Adam was ever humanly perfect. The perfect man that is created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26) is a composite man still in the process of development, a "man" composed of all the members of Christ's body or Church. (For further explanation, see our booklet *God's Spiritual Creation*, chapter IV, "The Man Made in God's Image.")

There is no truth to the theory of a "fall" in Eden. All covenant-makers have fallen many times during their day of probation, but if sincere, have picked themselves up and gone on. They are not condemned because Adam transgressed.

Most certainly Christ paid the "right price"—but only for His own redemption. He "did always those things that pleased" His heavenly Father. "When he was reviled, [He] reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (John 8:29; I Pet. 2:23). Christ paid the right price, but only for Himself: "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure" (I John 3:3).

Point 8: Just as Adam's sin condemned all his unborn posterity, so Christ's ransoming sacrifice redeemed all when He died innocently as a perfect human sacrifice.

No, Adam's sin did not condemn all his unborn posterity. "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin" (Deut. 24:16).

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek. 18:20).

And Jesus did not die innocently for the sins of others. He died innocently; His death was murder, not sacrifice. He bore the treatment of a sinner unjustly, and that was a part of the situation that developed as a result of His unflinching stand for God and righteousness. But it did nothing toward the salvation of others, only as an example.

Point 9: Christ's ransom opened the way for mankind to gain life everlasting in perfection.

No, not His death but His knowledge: "by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many" (Isa. 53:11). God's Word through Moses to Israel was, "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil" (Deut. 30:15). This antedated Christ's supposed "ransom" by 1500 years.

In Jesus' farewell charge to His disciples what did He command them to teach about the ransom He had provided for mankind? "And he said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46, 47). Not that He suffered to pay a penalty, or for a ransom, but it behooved Him to suffer that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name. Study Christ's teachings. Not once do we find Him saying He had to suffer for our sins, but we do hear Him saying we must practice right-doing, purity of heart, if ever we are to see God.

Peter was aware of how God evaluates character,

and how He will ransom. He said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him" (Acts 10:35).

Christ was our Pattern and Example, and we learn from Heb. 5:8 how He qualified Himself to be ransomed. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." He learned to obey, and so must we if we would be ransomed as He was. Hebrews 12:1 also is definite on the process leading to our ransom: "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set

down at the right hand of the throne of God." Christ procured His own ransom through obedience, and unless we render this same obedience we will never be ransomed.

Hebrews 12:14 pictures God's choosiness: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." No man without peace and holiness shall be ransomed.

Let us strive for purity, strive for holiness; let us be willing to pay the corresponding price of a complete death to sin for the ransom from ignorance and hopelessness; redemption from the vain traditions of our fathers; redemption from the ways of the flesh which make us unhappy and unpraiseworthy as we go through life; and for the chance to be ransomed from death and mortality through virtue of a lifetime spent in complete devotion to God. • •

The Upward Call

(Continued from page 9)

to you. Who are our true relatives? What did Jesus say? "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father, the same is my mother, and sister, and brother." It is a family which never fails or disappoints you. I have found it a better way; you can find it so, too.

LUCIUS. *[with a sigh]* It is not an easy decision—for me, at least. Perhaps I can work it out, with your help. . . . But I have wondered what I would do if persecution should arise. Anything can happen nowadays. Could I stand the disgrace, the physical tortures, perhaps a violent death? It's a question we may have to face some day, and I don't know . . .

PAUL. Very true, Lucius. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, in some form. But we all face death in some form and at some time. Rome honors its soldiers who suffer and die so that some corrupt politicians may gain power and a few landlords be enriched. Those who have fallen never know of their honors. But for the soldiers of Jesus Christ who suffer for their faith, even to death, the glory will be theirs to enjoy for ever and ever. What is a moment of suffering and scorn when we know that God and the angels are watching? It is a prospect which I face far more immediately than you *[holds up his chain]*, and from which I cannot escape. Yet as I look back over my life and consider the glorious prospect ahead, I ask myself: Where is the sacrifice? All this—and the Kingdom, too?

[He places his arm around the young man's shoulders affectionately as the curtain falls.]

NEXT ISSUE: *Hopelessness.*

Words to WALK By

Hunt for the good points in the other fellow—he may have to do the same with you.

Failure is the path of least persistence.

Courage is not the absence of difficulty, but the conquest of it.

The idle believer is the raw material of which backsliders are made.

A little *push* may eliminate the need for a great deal of *pull*.

Cheerfulness oils the machinery of life.

Too many of us speak twice before we think.

Golden character needs no gilding.

No man ever becomes suddenly either very good or very bad.

God will give to us only in the measure in which we give ourselves to Him.

There is no such thing as a steadfast traitor. The man who is steadfast has both feet on the ground on the same side of the fence.

It is the biggest cherry tree that gets hardest hit by the wind.

Dignity does not consist in possessing honors but in deserving them.

The man who rows the boat generally doesn't have time to rock it.

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God."

The Devil of the Bible

BECAUSE THE subject of the devil is so closely allied with "hell" in the minds of many people, we have chosen **The Devil of the Bible** as our next lesson topic.

In medieval times the devil was pictured as an immortal monster with great horns and hoofs, a fiendish character who tortured unfortunate sinners condemned to "hell." A painting depicting such a creature tending the fires of hell, suggesting unbelievable torture of the victims, is still in existence in a so-called Christian church in England.

While this characterization of the devil has long since disappeared, he is nonetheless thought to be very much alive and at work ordering all the evils of the present day.

But is the evil of the world ordered by a superhuman, unseen spirit? We will pursue the subject using the following outline:

- I. Who is the Devil?
 - A. Original Words Translated "Devil"
 - B. Origin of the Word "Satan"
 - C. Related Terms Used in Scripture

Who is the devil? Where is his abode? Does he tempt men to sin? Since it is the devil of the Bible we are concerned with, we shall go to the Bible for the answers.

I. WHO IS THE DEVIL?

Popular belief holds that the devil or Satan is a fallen angel, once a bright star in God's heaven, who, because of his misconduct was cast out of heaven. (How he happened to land on the earth and not some other planet is not told.) Once on the earth he became a "spirit creature," who tempts men and women to rebel against the authority of God. But is this the teaching of the Scriptures?

The idea of a superhuman being or spirit creature that tempts men and women to do evil is not found in the Bible. It was originally introduced into Christian thought from pagan mythology. **It is a product of theology and not taught in the Bible.** The def-

inition of devil in **Harper's Bible Dictionary** agrees with the Scriptures: "the personification of wickedness." **Unger's Bible Dictionary** gives as a primary definition, "One who slanders another for the purpose of injury, a calumniator," while another source gives for a definition, "Figuratively: an exceedingly wicked person; a demon, a fiend. Any great evil or calamity. A mischievous person."

In **Webster's International Dictionary** we find as some of the meanings for "devil," "The personal and supreme spirit of evil and unrighteousness in Jewish and Christian theology, the tempter and spiritual enemy of mankind, who is the adversary of God. A person thought of as misconducting himself; a wretched fellow." Truly, the devil as a personage, is of theology and not of the Bible.

A. Original Words Translated "Devil"

1. Old Testament usage. The word "devil" does not appear in the Old Testament Scriptures in the sense in which it is commonly used in theology. The Hebrew *sa-ir*, meaning "hairy one, kid, goat," is translated "devil" in the King James Version of the Bible. According to **Unger's Bible Dictionary**, this Hebrew word was used to describe "demons that inhabited the desert, and whose pernicious influence was sought to be averted by sacrifice. The Israelites brought this superstition and idolatry from Egypt where goats were worshiped as gods. These were the gods whom the Israelites worshiped in Egypt." These were the idols or gods to whom Joshua referred when he said: "Put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt" (24:14).

Also in the Old Testament, the Hebrew *shed* (shade) is rendered "devil" in Deut. 32:17: "They sacrificed unto devils, not to God." A similar usage is found in Psalm 107:37 where King David is reviewing the history of the Israelite nation: "They sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils." As used here, "devil" means an idol, or some form of a god which they worshiped, a custom adopted from the Canaanites. **It does not carry any meaning of a superhuman spirit being or fallen angel, tempting them to sin.**

2. New Testament usage. By New Testament times, the Jews had adopted much of the supersti-

tion of the pagan nations with whom they had come in contact and belief in demons had become widespread, thus the term is used freely in the New Testament. It was commonly believed that it was a "devil" or "demon" that entered into a man and made him ill or affected his mind. For this reason healing, especially of a mental illness, was frequently referred to as "casting out devils."

There are two different Greek words translated "devil" in the New Testament:

a. **Daimonion**, from the root **daimon**, which according to **Young's Analytical Concordance** means a "supernatural spirit of a bad nature, demonlike, devilish. To be vexed with a devil." We also note that different forms of the root **daimon** are used interchangeably and most often translated "devil."

In John 7:19, 20, Jesus asked the Jews: "Why go ye about to kill me? The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil [**daimonion**]: who goeth about to kill thee?" The expression, "Thou hast a devil," is equivalent to the present-day expression, "You are crazy," or "You are mad." A similar usage is found in Matt. 11:18: "For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil [**daimonion**]." It is inferred that because John the Baptist refused to do as those around him he was thought to be mentally unbalanced.

In Luke 9:37—42, a child, evidently a victim of epilepsy, is described as having a devil, "and Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father" (v. 42). Note that He "healed the child," indicating a physical ailment. We find other instances of those said to be "possessed with a devil" or "devils" that were miraculously "cast out," or healed in the Gospels. (See Matt. 12:22; 15:22; Luke 11:14; Matt. 8:16; 4:24.) Mark 5:15, 16 relates Jesus' healing of a man said to have been "possessed with the devil." The New English Bible, speaking of the man after he had been healed, reads, "They came to Jesus and saw the

madman who had been possessed by the legion of devils, sitting there clothed and in his right mind." It is evident the man had been insane.

b. **Diabolos** is a Greek word compounded of **dia** meaning "across, through," and **ballo**, meaning "to throw, strike." The compounded word, **diaballo**, from which **diabolos** is derived, means "to traduce, to accuse." **Diabolos** means a "false accuser, a slanderer," and is commonly translated "devil" in the New Testament. The translation reflects the common belief in demons in Apostolic times. According to **Barclay**, "the Greek **diabolos**, literally means a "slanderer."

We find the word used many times throughout the New Testament but in not one instance is there any suggestion of the influence of a superhuman being. Frequently the "devils" referred to are the pagan authorities who were only too willing to condemn the Christian believers. In Ephesians 6:11 Paul advises his brethren to "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil [**diabolos**]." As is evident from the verses following, the armor is spiritual. Likewise the devil is spiritual, described in v. 12 as "the rulers of the darkness of this world, . . . spiritual wickedness in high places."

I Peter 5:8 equates the devil with "the adversary," said to be walking about, "seeking whom he may devour." It was the authorities of the day who sought to falsely accuse and devour the saints.

In II Timothy 3:3 and Titus 2:3 **diabolos** has been correctly translated "false accusers," but in most instances of its use, it is translated "devil." In Revelation 2:10, the ecclesia at Smyrna was warned that "the devil [**diabolos**] shall cast some of you into prison." Obviously no fallen angel or supernatural power is indicated, for only the civil authorities of the day had power to cast into prison. The authorities were the "false accusers," the "devil [**diabolos**]."

Have you ever seen his picture
As you opened up the Book?
It made you often shudder
As you took a careful look.

With hoofs and horns and tail so long
He brought us boys such dread,
As there he stood with pitchfork strong
To keep the fires all red.

So strong is that old fellow
It's little God can do.
While the Devil gets the many
The Lord gets but a few.

Some say he was an angel,
As shining as the sun,
Till God said to this Lucifer,
" 'Tis time that you were done."

The Devil

Who is he?

Where is he?

When simple folks get angry
And meanest words are said,
They claim it is the Devil
By whom they have been led.

That Devil with such hoofs and horns,
He never spoke to me.
I wonder where on this fair earth
His majesty can be?

In all my many travels,
In things I had to do,
A glimpse of that old fellow
I never caught. Did you?

I'll tell you where the Devil is,
And tell you now, right quick;
His majesty would flee away
If mother used the stick.

Have you not read in blessed Book
What tempts us all to sin?
It's nothing more than wicked lusts
That come from heart within.

Do you want to view the Devil?
You ask, "Where can he be?"
If you are stirred with anger,
In the looking-glass you'll see.

Remember, all the evil comes,
From wicked heart within,
Don't put it on the devil
And say he made you sin.

C. Origin of the Word "Satan"

The word **Satan** is actually an untranslated Hebrew word meaning "an adversary." It is derived from the verb **stn**, which with the vowels added (vowel points were used in the Hebrew to indicate the proper vowel), becomes **Satan**. Used as a verb it means "to lie in wait, to oppose, to be an adversary"; hence, the noun form means an "adversary, an opposer."

According to the **Interpreter's Dictionary**, "the Hebrew root from which the name Satan derives, means primarily 'obstruct, oppose.' It is used in the Old Testament of obstructing a man's path (Num. 22:22, 32), opposing in war (I Sam. 29:4), preferring charges in a court of law (Ps. 109:6), and playing the part of an adversary in general (Ps. 38:20, 21; 109:4, 20, 29). In the same Hebrew word family are the nouns from which we have 'hostility' or 'hatred' (see Gen. 27:41; Job 16:9; Ps. 55:3, 4; Hos. 9:7).

"In the Old Testament, nowhere does Satan appear as a distinctive demonic figure, opposed to God and responsible for all evil. It merely defines the role which the being in question happens to play in a particular situation. It is only in the apocryphal scriptures that Satan begins to emerge as a distinctive personality."

Barclay gives an interesting bit of light on the evolution of the word **Satan**. "The development of the conception of Satan is very interesting. The word **Satan** in Hebrew simply means an adversary; and in the Old Testament it is so used of ordinary human adversaries and opponents again and again. The angel of the Lord is the **Satan** who stands in Balaam's way (Num. 22:22); the Philistines fear that David may turn out to be their **satan** (I Sam. 29:4); David regards Abishai as his **satan** (II Sam. 19:22); Solomon declares that God has given him such peace and prosperity that he has no **satan** left to oppose him (I Kings 5:4). The word began by meaning an adversary in the widest sense of the term. But the word takes another step on its downward path; it begins to mean one who pleads a case against a person. It is in this sense that it is used in the first chapter of Job. . . . The task of Satan was to say everything that could be said against a man.

"The other title of Satan is the **devil**; the word devil comes from the Greek **diabolos**, which literally means a slanderer. It is a small step from the thought of one who searches for everything that can be said against a man to the thought of one who deliberately and maliciously slanders man in the presence of God. But in the Old Testament Satan is still an emissary of God and not yet the malignant, supreme enemy of God. He is the **adversary of man**.

"But now the word takes the last step on its

downward course. Through their captivity the Jews learned something of Persian thought. Persian thought is based on the conception that in this universe there are two powers, a power of the light and a power of the dark, . . . a power of good and a power of evil; the whole universe is a battle-ground between them and man must choose his side in that cosmic conflict. . . . in this world there is God and God's Adversary. It was almost inevitable that Satan should come to be regarded as **The Adversary par excellence**. That is what his name means; that is what he always was to man; Satan becomes the essence of everything that is against God."*

In the English translations of the Bible, the Hebrew **satan** has been rendered both as "satan" and "adversary." Numbers 22:22 is an example: "And the angel of the Lord stood in the way for an adversary [**stn**] against him." In verse 32 of the same chapter the same Hebrew word is rendered "withstand": "Behold, I went out to withstand [**stn**] thee, because thy way is perverse before me." This is the same Hebrew word **satan** [**stn**] that is left untranslated as Satan elsewhere in the Old Testament Scriptures. Because the adversary was "the angel of the Lord" the translators correctly rendered it first "adversary" and then "withstand."

But when the adversary is represented as being wicked, as Job's accuser, the Hebrew **stn** is translated "Satan." The figure of Satan in the book of Job is used as support by those who believe Satan to be a superhuman being who is the root of all evil. The text reads: "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them" (Job 1:6). The "sons of God" who presented themselves before the Lord were the believers of that day, gathering to worship God. Satan, or Job's adversary, came among them as one of the worshipers. He is represented as being jealous of Job and seeking to find some cause against him. For Satan, or an adversary, to be among "the sons of God" is not unusual. We find it to be true throughout the Scriptures and it is just as true today.

D. Other Related Terms Used in Scripture

Several other related terms appear in the Scriptures used as symbols of evil, but believed by theology to be other names for Satan or the devil. We will discuss these terms briefly:

1. **Apollyon**. This term appears in our common version in but one place, Rev. 9:11, where it is used to describe "the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the

* *The Daily Study Bible*, Vol. 3, pp. 13, 14, Wm. Barclay.

Greek tongue, . . . Apollyon." In the Hebrew, the word means "a destroyer."

While the Greek form of the word appears but once, the Hebrew form of the word, **Abaddon**, is found in three verses of the Old Testament and its usage is self-explanatory. In our Authorized Version it is translated "destruction" in each case, denoting death or the place of the dead. In Job 26:6 we read: "Hell [**Sheol**, the grave] is naked before him, and destruction [**Abaddon**] hath no covering." It is also used in the same sense in Prov. 15:11 and 27:20. The New English Bible leaves **Abaddon** untranslated in each of these texts. Hence, **Abaddon** or **Apollyon**, is synonymous with **destruction**.

2. **Beelzebub, or Baalzebub.** In the Old Testament, **Beelzebub**, or **Baalzebub** was an idol of the Ekronites, described in II Kings 1:3 as the "god of Ekron." The meaning is obscure, but **Baal** was a common title for Semitic gods, and **Zebub** derives from a Hebrew root meaning "flies"; hence **Beelzebub** is "lord of flies."

In the Greek New Testament the name is spelled **Beelzeboul**, the change of sound being perhaps introduced by the Jews for the purpose of throwing contempt at heathen gods. It is used of the chief or prince of demons in Matthew 12:24 and Luke 11:15. Here the Jews, wanting to belittle Jesus' power to heal, attributed it to "Beelzebub" in scorn, saying "This fellow doth not cast out devils [**daimonion**], but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." **Beelzebub** is believed by some to be the "prince of evil spirits."

3. **Anti-Christ.** The word Anti-christ is found only in the New Testament writings of John to describe one who assumes the guise of Christ or opposes Christ. According to the Emphatic Diaglott, "strictly defined, **antichrist** was a mythical demonic or demonic-human adversary of Christ. It occurs five times: I John 2:18, 22; 4:3; II John 7. It signifies 'against Christ,' and is defined by John to be any one who denies the Father and the Son, or that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh."

Some today equate Anti-christ with Satan or the devil, believing him to be a "sinister demon-inspired leader [who] will rise to dominate the world in the end-time, persecute the saints, seek to destroy the Jews and banish the name of God and His Christ from the earth, and thus take over. . . . thus thwarting God's plan for the Messianic millennial kingdom. In the end he is destroyed by the second advent of Christ who sets up the earthly kingdom."*

4. **Lucifer.** The name **Lucifer** is from the Hebrew **Helel**, meaning "a shining one," and also sig-

nifies "bright star," probably what we call the "morning star."

A wide segment of theology hold to the theory that **Lucifer** is the original **Satan**, but this is only in theology, for in the Bible we find him to be a symbolic representation of the king of Babylon in his pride, pomp, glory and death. The prophet **Isaiah** was told to "take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, . . . How art thou fallen from heaven, O **Lucifer**, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" (14:4, 11, 12). **That Lucifer was a man and not a superhuman being is shown clearly by v. 16: "Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?"**

(The subject of **Lucifer** will be discussed more fully in a subsequent issue of the **Megiddo Message**.)

5. **The Evil One.** The term occurs several times in the New Testament as the equivalent of **Satan** or **devil**. In the parable of the Sower, it is the "wicked one" that "catcheth away that which was sown" in the heart of the man who hears the word (Matt. 13:19). In John 17:15 Jesus prays that His disciples may be kept from this same power of evil. In Eph. 6:16 "the wicked" throw the fiery darts which the man armed with righteousness must resist. John writes of the "wicked one" which must be overcome (I John 2:12, 13; 5:18, 19). In each case the use is the same—"the evil one" signifies the powers of evil and those who work wickedness.

To be a messenger you must know the message.

TEST YOURSELF

1. What is the devil of theology?
2. Describe briefly the devil of the Bible.
3. What Hebrew word is translated "devil" in the Old Testament? What does it mean? What Hebrew word suggests a custom of the Canaanites?
4. What Greek words are translated "devil"? What are the principle definitions of each?
5. What is the Hebrew word for "Satan"? What does it mean? Give several examples of its usage in Scripture.
6. List the following and define each briefly: **Apollyon**, **Beelzebub**, **Anti-Christ**, **Lucifer**, the **Evil One**.

Reprints of these studies are available upon request.

* Unger's Bible Dictionary.

THE SABBATH

WHEN WAS IT GIVEN?
TO WHOM WAS IT GIVEN?
WHY WAS IT GIVEN?
WAS IT TO LAST FOREVER?
IF NOT, WHEN WAS IT TO CEASE?
WHAT LAW ARE WE NOW UNDER?

A Shadow

THE LAW of Moses was a "shadow" of better things to come. Its sacrifices, blood, Passover, sin-offerings, altars, etc. all pointed forward. Its sanctuary looked toward the greater house of God, the church; and its Sabbath was a foreshadowing of the seventh thousand-year day in the plan of God, a day of rest and peace for all mankind.

A "Partition" Removed

Paul uses still another metaphor to reinforce his point that the law of Moses is done away: "For he is our peace, who hath made both [Jew and Gentile] one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances" (Eph. 2:14, 15). The law of Moses was a partition wall between the Jews and the Gentiles. Christ broke down this wall by abolishing "the law of commandments contained in ordinances," the law of Moses around which clustered all the ordinances and ceremonies of the Levitical priesthood. This was done "that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (v. 16). The date of the abolition of the law is placed at the cross.

In the Epistle to the Romans, chapter 7, Paul uses another simile to show that the law was abolished. "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law;

so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter" (Rom. 7:1—4, 6). Paul is using the law of matrimony to teach the abolition of the Mosaic system. The first husband was "the law"; but that husband "died"; that is, the law was abolished. It was "nailed to the cross," then buried.

But "ye are become dead to the law," and are now married to Christ; He is the second "husband." The old is "done away," and the new "remains."

The End Prophesied

The prophet Hosea forecast the end of the law of Moses: "I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts" (Hosea 2:11). Isaiah expresses God's disdain for Israel's insincerity in their worship: "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them" (Isa. 1:13, 14).

The Law "A Sign Forever"

Why was the Sabbath said to be a "sign for ever" if it is no longer binding?

H. M. Riggle explains this point in his book, *The Sabbath and the Lord's Day*. We quote: "While the word 'forever,' speaking of spiritual things and of

future destinies, etc., means unending, it is also used in speaking of laws to indicate that they are in continuous force, standing, permanent. In such case it indicates a law unchangeable and unrepealable while the system of which it is a part lasts. This we shall now prove by the Bible.

"When the Passover was first instituted in Egypt, God said, 'Ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever' (Ex. 12:24). After giving directions for the use of olive-oil in the lamps of the tabernacle, he said, 'It shall be a statue for ever unto their generations' (Ex. 27:21). Following directions for the high-priestly garments that Aaron and his sons were to wear in their ministration, it is written, 'It shall be a statue for ever unto him and his seed after him' (Ex. 28:43). And the same thing is affirmed of nearly every ceremonial precept of the law. So, then, the Sabbath was to be a 'sign for ever' just as the Passover and other types and shadows were. They have passed away long ago; so also has that Sabbath. The Bible leaves no peg upon which to hang its perpetuity."*

The Decalog Gone--What Law Remains?

People who believe the Ten Commandments to be the embodiment of all good law feel that if we take them away, nothing remains. However, this is far from true. Numerous commands appear in Scripture which are not even hinted at in the Decalog. For example:

"Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth" (Ps. 37: 8, 9).

"The thought of foolishness is sin" (Prov. 24:9).

"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds" (Col. 3:9). Nothing in the Decalog condemns lying.

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord" (Jas. 4:10).

"Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matt. 23:12). Nothing in the Decalog demanded humility.

"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 6:1). Nothing in the law of Moses condemned seeking honor of men.

And there are many, *many* more.

* H. M. Riggle, *The Sabbath and the Lord's Day*, pp. 93, 94.

‡ *The Plain Truth*, "The Apostle Paul—Commandment Breaker, or Commandment Keeper?", Dec., 1965.

So far as the specific commands of the Decalog themselves are concerned, nine of them are repeated and amplified many times throughout the New Testament. Worship of God only is enjoined fifty times; idolatry is forbidden twelve times; profanity four times; honor of father and mother is commanded six times; adultery is forbidden twelve; theft six; false witness four; and covetousness, nine times. In just two short passages Paul himself mentions six of the Ten Commandments (see I Cor. 6:9, 10; Gal. 5:19—21).

The New Testament forbids not only the evils mentioned in the Decalog but scores of others such as drunkenness, love of pleasure, pride, anger, impatience, selfishness, boasting, filthy talk, evil thoughts, foolishness, uncleanness, strife, hatred, envyings, etc. These commands belong to the "new and better" covenant established upon "better promises."

With the Decalog abolished, we are by no means without law. For a quick review, read Colossians 3, or Ephesians 5, or Galatians 4, or Romans 12, and you will be convinced.

The Sabbath Abolished, A Rest Remains

Hebrews 4:9 is a text used frequently by Sabbath-keepers to support their position that the Sabbath must be observed today. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." We quote from a recent periodical: "But the word translated 'rest' comes from the Greek word 'sabbatismos' and, as the marginal readings in many Bibles show, means 'keeping of the Sabbath' or 'Sabbath observance.' Because the King James translators didn't believe this verse meant what it said they translated 'sabbatismos' by the obscure word 'rest.' This verse, then, tells us point blank that those who really are God's people will be keeping holy the day He made holy."‡

But does it? Does this verse tell us that we must remember the seventh day of every week?

The context of the verse shows clearly that the author is talking about a future, better, promised rest just as Jesus was when He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28—30).

Hebrews 4:1 reads: "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." He is speaking of a "rest" which we must "fear" lest we "come short of it." Could this ever be said of the seventh day of the week? Cannot *anyone* enter into the rest of the weekly sabbath?

The aforementioned author quotes Genesis, where

God in the allegory is said to "rest" the seventh day—here is the same "rest" promised by Jesus, the seventh thousand-year day of rest.

"Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:"—how could this possibly be said of the seventh day of the week? All Israel "entered in" on that sabbath for generations—"For if Jesus [Joshua] had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day." This is a rest which the children of Israel did not experience. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." The writer then warns us again to work, lest we too fail of that rest: "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (vs. 6—11).

The word used in this text and translated "rest" is *sabbatismos*, but it is not the same word used elsewhere in the New Testament to designate the seventh day of the week, the Sabbath. The Greek word for "sabbath" is *sabbaton*, meaning: "day of weekly repose from secular avocations."† The Greek word translated "rest" in Heb. 4:9 is *sabbatismos*, meaning: "the repose of Christianity (as a type of heaven):—rest. Used figuratively."‡

(Continued Next Issue)

† James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*.

Learning to Keep Silence

THE BIBLE says there is a time to speak and a time to keep silent. Knowing when it is time to keep silent is a difficult art mastered by very few people.

Most of us manage in the course of our lives to get into a vast amount of trouble by speaking at the wrong time. And how many golden opportunities for silence we miss!

Learn to hold thy tongue, says the proverb. Five words cost Zacharias forty weeks of silence.

True silence is to the spirit what sleep is to the body: nourishment and refreshment. It is a great virtue; it covers folly, keeps secrets, avoids disputes, and prevents sin.

A judicious reticence is hard to learn, but it is one of the great lessons of life. Sometimes it is anger or malice or deliberate guile that prompts us to

say what would have been better left unsaid. Quite often, however, it is simply a case of being nervous, ill at ease, or overanxious to please. Lacking the poise to keep silent, we find ourselves seeming to agree with sentiments we actually abhor, or revealing information we should have kept confidential.

This human weakness is of very long standing, for there are many references to it in parts of the Bible that were written two or three thousand years ago.

In the Psalms, the tongue is likened to a sharp sword and a carelessly wielded razor.

The prophet Jeremiah added another military metaphor: an uncurbed tongue is a cruel arrow.

Among the seven abominations listed in Proverbs are three related to speech: a false, lying tongue; a false witness telling a pack of lies, and the man who stirs up quarrels among brethren.

The book of Proverbs abounds with other warnings against the mischief that can be stirred by untrained words. "When a fool speaks, ruin is near." "There is no spite in a just man's talk: it is the stupid who are fluent with calumny." "When men talk too much sin is never far away." "Common sense holds its tongue." "A mischievous tongue will end in disaster."

But it is in the New Testament, specifically in the Epistle of James, that we find the most vigorous comments about this ancient human weakness of talking when we ought to be listening.

Beware of the tongue that's set on fire of hell, and flames in slander, falsehood, perjury, in malice, idle talking, thoughtless tales; speak not too much, nor without thought; let truth in all things small or great dwell on thy lips. Remember, God hath said, he that in word offends not is a perfect man; while he that bridles not his tongue deceives himself and shows his faith is vain (James 1:26; 3).

They think too little who talk too much. All of us often go wrong, and James says, "The man who never says a wrong thing is a perfect character."

To anyone inclined to regard careless speech as a minor matter, James offers the reminder that a huge forest can be set ablaze by a tiny spark. "And the tongue is in effect a fire," he says. It represents among our members the world with all its wickedness. It pollutes our entire being.

He who cannot refrain from much speaking is like a city without walls; therefore, if you hold your tongue, you shall seldom err. Restrain your impatience, hearken much, and speak little—for the tongue is the instrument of the greatest good and the greatest evil in the world. ● ●

Unload that Camel!

IN THE DAYS of Jesus, every prominent city was surrounded by a wall for defense. In the wall was a large gate which was closed at sunset and placed under guard. In this gate was a small door through which approved travelers could pass. The door was large enough to admit a person quite easily, but large animals such as camels had to be unloaded and made to crawl through on their knees, and even then with difficulty. This small door in the large gate was called the "needle's eye."

Jesus drew a very significant lesson for His listeners from this needle's eye. He said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Matt. 19:24). Jesus was not against the person who was rich. He was practical. He knew just how hard a thing it was for a man or woman to do certain things under certain circumstances. Jesus was concerned about the mental attitude that we have toward our means, our possessions, our position, our intelligence, or even our friends. Well did He know how easily human affections are attached to and absorbed by the things he has around him.

Perhaps because we are not rich we have failed to note the import of Jesus' valuable lesson concerning the camel's load. However, upon examining ourselves we may find many things in our lives that would hinder our passage through the needle's eye. Our load may include things small or great, valuable or valueless. If lesser interests are taking first place in our lives, they are a part of that camel's load which must be removed. Jesus did not mean that we must necessarily get rid of conditions and things in themselves, but that we must change our attitude toward the fleeting things of life. Unload that camel. No doubt if we take a serious look at the load we will find there are some things that we will want to discard altogether.

In a Bible sense, we are fools if we put our trust in earthly things. These can, so to speak, take wings anytime and fly away. They are worthless for real defense. As good king Hezekiah said of the Assyrian king, "With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us."

Someone once spoke wisely concerning money: "To possess money is very well, it may be a most valuable servant; but to be possessed by it, is to be possessed by a devil, and one of the meanest and worst kind of devils."

One might say, "Far be it from me that I should trust in earthly things." But just how much do our

spirits rise and fall with the stock market, with losses and gains, with the ups and downs of life and health? Our delight, our security, our rest and confidence must be in the Lord. Does our faith have power and zeal to go forward regardless of things here and now?

We unload that camel by putting things in their proper place, by making God the object of all our affections, the governing power of our whole life.

At the setting of the sun the travelers come home toward the city gate. In our spiritual journey toward the city of God, we are reminded of the words of Jeremiah, "Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out" (Jer. 6:4). Indeed, our day of salvation is fast closing in. How we should hasten to unload that camel that we may enter the city! It is not something that we can accomplish in a short time; it involves our whole life.

Sometimes doctors check a patient's strength by the grasp of his hand. We also can check our spiritual condition by the grasp of our hand. If our grasp on the things of this life, the things of here and now, is with a clutch that is snug and strong, our condition is serious—the load on the camel's back is heavy. We should hold the things of this life with a loose hand, ready to drop them at a moment's notice if the Lord wills.

The children of Israel were given a sharp warning against times when all went well with them, when they had brooks and springs, wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, goodly houses and plenty to eat. They were sternly warned: "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day" (Deut. 8:11).

Beware. Too often Israel forgot God. Too easily we forget God.

Many times God brought Israel to their knees by withholding His blessings, even their very sustenance. Then Israel would turn and cry unto the Lord for help. Too often men look to God as a last resource, seek Him when all else has failed and there is no other place to go.

The warning given to the Hebrews is timely: Let us beware lest we forget God (Heb. 3:12—14). When God becomes second in our lives, the things of the present are naturally first—and the camel is laden down too heavily to pass through the gate into the Eternal City. Unload that camel.

Only by retaining God first in all the thoughts and affairs of life shall we have that camel bare of all its earthly excess. Then only shall we be marked as an approved traveler and have a welcome passage through the "needle's eye." • •



Danny's Ear Trouble



MOTHER TESTED the hot iron. It sizzled. This assured her that it would be hot enough to put on the patch. She shook her head wondering about her young son. "So many holes and rips to repair." She spoke aloud to herself.

"Mother!" Danny bounced into the kitchen, waving a large manila envelope. "It's from the doctor at school! Mother, I'm so happy! The report is ex - ex - -"

"Excellent," Mother volunteered, trying to help out her six-year-old.

"Excellent," Danny repeated. "My nose, eyes and . . ." his voice faltered. "And . . . even . . . *my ears* are excellent!"

Mother looked over her pile of mending, pleased. She was glad *that* task was finished for awhile! But it looked like another task had just sprung up. Danny was sitting quiet and solemn after the big, thrilling outburst, holding his report rather limply in his hands.

"Danny," Mother questioned with apparent concern, "your ears? Whatever gave you any impression that there was something wrong with your ears?"

Danny flinched when she said "ears" and reached to cover his own with his two pudgy hands. Mother looked over the report. It was no surprise to Mrs. Skelly that everything was fine. Her six-

year-old was sturdy and normal in every way that she knew of.

"Mother," he said, as he studied his reflection in the hall mirror, "do you see anything wrong when you look at me?" His reflection showed bright stalks of reddish-brown hair, a typical boy's face well covered with freckles, and clear blue eyes.

"Why, no, Son." She was sure now that this was something that had been bothering him for a long time. Mother sat down and looked at Danny, meeting his concerned look.

"Son, you can tell your mother, we are the only two persons here." She gently waved her arms trying to indicate a close feeling to Danny.

Danny responded to his mother's confidential tones.

"Mother, my ears." He tried to be brave. "My ears, are they all so big?" He was watching his mother carefully for any indications of emotion as he asked those dreaded words.

"Mother, are they?" Danny was pleading now, as a large question mark spread across his speckled features.

Mother was on guard, careful to suppress a humorous thought as she reached to comfort him. She could feel him tremble beneath her caress. She was sure now that Danny had overheard many times different things spo-

ken of him, to the effect that his ears were huge. He was often called "big-eared."

"Yes, Danny." She tried to tell him as tactfully as possible. "You do have enormous ears; but looking into that hall mirror won't tell you. Nor can a doctor tell you. We can be very thankful that you have good ears to hear with. Big or small in size doesn't really matter too much, as long as they are healthy and can do their job well. But like all of our many wonderful blessings we have to be careful how we use them.

"Dear, you have been using your ears to hear things that you shouldn't. Do you understand just a little? This saying that your ears are big simply means that you are listening for and taking in too much — of things not meant for your ears." She let her voice drop as she tried hard to make Danny understand. The clock on the kitchen wall showed clearly that it was well past time to get supper started. This conversation would have to be continued later.

Mother got up from her rocker and ruffled Danny's hair. "I must get some supper started now. My boy is hungry, isn't he?" she asked, knowing full well that he was. "Think about this and tonight after supper I will try to help you understand further. But,

Danny, let me assure you that your ears are just fine."

Mother watched Danny pick up his school bag and walk up the stairway. He seemed satisfied that his ears were all right and when she caught his glance, he gave her a faint, sheepish smile. Knowing Danny, this meant, "I am glad my ears are normal but I am ashamed that I don't know the proper way to use them."

That evening, Mother placed a heaping bowl of popcorn on the hall table near Danny.

"This feels real cozy," Danny said as he watched mother place a large apple log on the crackling fire. Danny began to get comfortable, finding his favorite sitting place right in the middle of the room on the floor. He crossed his legs and began to enjoy the fragrant corn.

Mother reached for her knitting as she began. "Do you remember when your father and I took you to the Park Zoo? I believe you were very young then, maybe only about four years old . . ."

Danny's quick mind brought back the cool rainy day. "Yes, I remember. Grandpa and Grandma Muller were with us." He also remembered the zebras, lions and tigers and the funny monkeys. "Only I was real little then," Danny piped.

"Do you remember the snakes and the old snake charmer?"

Danny began to squirm gleefully, remembering. "Yes. Sure I do—but I don't like snakes very much. Why?"

"The charmer carried with him a number of snakes and they got very indignant at being disturbed. They twisted and wiggled in the most alarming fashion. But when that charmer took out his flute and played some notes on it, soft, low and sweet, the old ugly snakes stopped their angry twisting; and instead, they lifted their heads and began to sway backwards and forwards to the time of the music. As the charmer played louder and quicker, the creatures picked up the tempo and would raise their heads higher and higher and sway their bodies more rapidly. When the charmer moved, the snakes would glide with him. When he stopped, they stopped. They were completely under the charmer's spell, or, to put it another way, they were listening with both ears and mind wide open.

"And do you remember the adder? He did not hear. He did not pay any attention but he simply coiled himself around with his head in the middle of his fold. He chose not to hear. He stopped his ears on purpose. He closed his ears and mind to the sounds of the charmer.

"Sometimes I have seen you so busy. You get curled up with a new book, completely fascinated by it. You are deaf to what is going on around you because your whole being is closed to outer sounds. You are open only to the inner music that book is making to you."

Danny looked astonished at all that his mother could remember and how smart she must be. "Why, Mother, that means that I can open and close my

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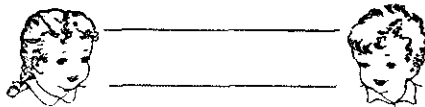
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MEGIDDO MESSAGE

ears — almost like my eyes! I didn't know that before!"

"Yes, Danny. God gave you your two wonderful ears to hear with, but you can decide what you will listen to. Dear, you have always been called 'big eared' because you listen, snap and pay attention to things that do not concern you. Use your God-given sound-brain, your wonderful gift of hearing, and tune it to the sound that God dictates. Be like the snakes in the zoo, but let God be the Charmer. But when the need arises and occasion demands, then choose to be like the adder. We do not have to listen if we do not want to. Can you remember all of this, Son?"

Danny didn't answer right away. He had a lot to think about. He stared at the flickering flames.

"Never, never again," thought Danny. He then nodded to his mother to show her that he did understand.

"From now on, I will use my two very good ears to hear the right tones, whether from Father, Mother, or big sister Judy, and especially God who made my ears so perfectly."

Danny learned a true feeling of thankfulness that evening. He was thankful for an understanding mother that took the time to explain these strange new things to him. He was thankful to God, for he was sure he would receive help to train his ears so that he could tune them to the right sounds. • •

The Quiet Hour

Amid the world of restless heat,
When pants the higher life,
What joy to find a calm retreat,
Where living waters murmur sweet,
A quiet hour from strife.

O quiet hour! with God shut in,
And all the world shut out!
Here heaven's hidden joys begin,
Delights my soul would revel in,
And thoughts that are devout.

O quiet hour, in which God speaks
As friend would speak with friend!
Here faith mounts up to lofty peaks,
To view the land the pilgrim seeks,
And earth and heaven blend.

O quiet hour! O trysting place
Where oft I meet with Him!
I almost see Him face to face,
And almost feel His warm embrace—
My cup runs o'er the brim.

Obituary

Byron W. Simmons

On July 31 we gathered in the Megiddo Church to pay our last respects to our eldest member, friend and brother, Byron W. Simmons. We paid our respects, but we do not believe they are the last respects. Our Brother believed strongly in the Bible promise that the dead in Christ shall rise, and when that day comes, we hope he will receive honors far beyond anything we could possibly bestow on him now.

Our Brother was in his ninety-fifth year—quite an age for a human being to acquire. Though small of stature, he enjoyed a remarkable degree of physical vigor and better-than-average health at an age where many men consider their productive life terminated.

About five years ago Brother Simmons' eyesight began to fail. Total blindness developed about two years ago. He took the loss of his sight in just the way a Christian should take it, saying, "Lord, you knew this affliction was coming upon me, and if you saw fit to allow it to come, I should be able to endure it in good grace, and continue to live joyfully and hopefully through days and years of sightlessness."

Our Brother didn't allow his age and declining physical health to cause him to forget his God who had kept him in good health those many years, and he never ceased to be thankful. Being unable to read due to blindness, he meditated and talked about the blessed precepts and promises with which he was so familiar. Our Brother remained mentally alert to the end of his days, and was spared any prolonged term of suffering.

Brother Simmons enjoyed the kindness of many friends who were concerned about his welfare. His meals were provided, he was cared for, he was assisted to wherever he wanted to go, and for all such services he was grateful.

Our Brother joined our Rochester Congregation in 1910, and immediately began to take an active part in the work of the Church, especially the missionary activities. Having found a good thing, he wanted to share it.

Early in 1914 eight of the younger men of the Church decided to inaugurate a movement which they styled The Megiddo Progressive Workers. Brother Simmons was a charter member. The group met weekly to study and test their ability to defend their beliefs before each other. They also formed a singing group.

Later that same year the group traveled by rail

into northern New York and Vermont, camping in a large tent which served as a movable camp and as temporary headquarters for the missionary group. They held numerous meetings in homes and halls and churches.

A carpenter and builder by trade, our Brother gave ten of his productive summers to the missionary field. He was active in the group which operated yachts on the New York Barge Canal system, and later in the travels of the Gospel Car. Finances were difficult during those years when much of the best part of the year was spent away from the business, but our Brother made the sacrifice, and the Lord blessed the efforts.

Through succeeding years our Brother remained missionary-minded. As a part of the Progressive Missionary Group he had traveled many thousands of miles; and many other thousands of miles he traveled on missionary ventures into the Middle and Far West, into other parts of the United States and into Canada in an effort to instruct and enlighten and encourage people who were interested in the teaching of the Bible. On these trips he also placed literature in places where he thought it could do the most good. He remained in that frame of mind right to the end of his life, contributing wholeheartedly to any missionary activity that called for help.

After failing health prevented missionary travel, our Brother engaged in the ministry of letter-writing—a ministry in which he was especially adept—trying to stimulate and encourage those to whom he could no longer minister personally.

Whatever our Brother had that could be used in the service of the Lord he gave, willingly and generously. Among his outstanding gifts was a talent for singing, and he retained exceptional use of his voice even through declining years. Our Brother early became a member of the church choir and musical groups, and continued with those organizations until about five years ago when failing eyesight made it necessary for him to resign.

Our Brother is survived by one sister, Mrs. Frank L. Howell, of Redlands, California.

Funeral services were conducted by the Reverend K. E. Flowerday. Interment was in Mount Hope cemetery, where he will sleep until the arrival of the day for which he lived—the return of the prophet Elijah, and the great King, Jesus Christ. ● ●

There is no gate to the Kingdom except at the end of the pathway of duty.

LETTERS

No Blood?

In response to a notice in a newspaper, I received a copy of the *Megiddo Message*. After reading all of it, I have not convinced myself that I should subscribe to it.

In one article the author asks the question: "What is it to be a Christian?" and the answer is given, "It is to be like Christ."

Nowhere in the magazine have I found any indication of the Deity of Christ. Nowhere have I found the word "blood" used. Nowhere have I found any mention of remission of sins. I would appreciate a statement of your doctrine.

Hollywood, Florida

P. R. M.

Keep Working

Growing into holiness takes every minute of our time; we have no time to waste. We must keep working with self until we can say we have overcome every evil. That means we must bring every thought into subjection. It is a real task, but something that must be done.

We must keep working while we have time, for soon the night comes when no man can work (John 9:4).

Carrollton, Ohio

L. W.

Striving for Perfection

The slackness of working people these days, together with the slackness of morals and speech surely go to show that the coming both of Elijah and our beloved Lord is very imminent. This being the case, are we ready? We should work as never before so that we can be found without spot and without wrinkle.

We must be perfect, for as James 2:10 (NEB) tells us, if a man keeps the whole law apart from one single point, he is a law-breaker. Again reading from the NEB, Matt. 5:48 says, "You must therefore be all goodness, just as your heavenly Father is all good."

To become perfect we must have implicit faith, believing that all the good things God has promised to overcomers will surely be fulfilled, for God is a person of Truth; it is impossible for Him to lie.

With all these good things to look forward to, it would seem an easy task to keep all the commands of the Father; yet if we are not on the alert *all* the time and not some of the time, little wrongs creep in, such as a sharp word, a little frustration, a bitter feeling, and we have to start all over again. God is longsuffering and willing to forgive, but this longsuffering will cease when God's time comes; then there will be no more time for repentance.

So let us all make an extra big effort to kill the old man completely, making it impossible for him to rear his ugly head again.

Swansea, South Wales

M. S.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

"If a man or woman marries a divorced person, do they have to separate if they come to know the truth of God's Word? Or is it possible for them to ask God to forgive them and stay married? I have always understood that when two persons are married, they are married for life, whether Christian or not. Can this be proved from the Bible?"

If a person is not a Christian, if he makes no profession to follow the decrees of the law of God, he is then "a law unto [himself]" (Rom. 2:14), and will not be held accountable for what he does or fails to do.

Romans 3:19 is explicit: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law." And Rom. 4:15 is equally direct: "For where no law is, there is no transgression." But with the Christian, the situation is different. Having promised to serve God, he will be held responsible for his actions thereafter.

The words of Jesus in Matthew 5, a far more perfect standard than was demanded under the law of Moses (see Lev. 20), totally disallow divorce. In the eyes of God an original marriage must stand until the death of one of the parties. And while it stands, no other can be lawfully contracted. But Jesus positively forbade divorce. "Whosoever shall put away his wife, . . . causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced com-miteth adultery."

This is the law binding upon all Christians. But the fact that whatsoever the law says it says only to those under the law would relieve a person marrying a divorcee before he had a knowledge of the way of life, or made any profession, from any responsibility for his actions. Hence, it would not be held against him as a sin.

"I believe that until a child has understanding and knowledge of sin, he has not yet sinned. Therefore, if a child dies young, he will go to heaven. Could you please explain your sentence: 'No child will die in infancy if at maturity he would do God's will.'"

You are correct in believing that until a child has a knowledge of right and wrong, he could not sin; but it is equally true that until he has a knowledge of the law of God, he could not become right-

eous. Christians are not born; they are made.

Before a child can be accounted a child of God, he must be taught. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. . . . It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:44, 45). Knowledge must come first. A newborn infant could not have that knowledge, nor could a child acquire it until some measure of mental development had taken place.

Your allusion to the familiar belief of going to heaven for reward is not surprising, but it is not Scriptural. Jesus said in His First Sermon, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5). And after He had ascended to heaven and been there a number of years, He sent back this message: "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12). He also said to the Jews and to His disciples, "Whither I go, ye cannot come" (John 13:33). They could not go to heaven where He was going, and He definitely promised to return to earth again.

You ask for an explanation of our last sentence: "No child will die in infancy if at maturity he would do God's will." That statement is a logical conclusion to what had been said by Jesus in John 7:17: that all who will do the Father's will shall know of the doctrine. God will see to it that any person who will do His will shall be given the opportunity of knowing it, hence would not be allowed to die in infancy.

"Do you believe in personal salvation?"

Salvation is a personal matter. No one can be good for me, and I cannot be good for someone else. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek. 18:20).

If by your question you are alluding to the belief of many religious people that we are saved here and now, the answer is that we are not! Jesus said, "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matt. 24:13). Note the future tense: "the same *shall be saved*." Paul spoke of immortality as something to be *sought*, not as a present possession: "To them who by patient continuance in

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well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life" (Rom. 2:7).

Salvation is God's reward for a life of full surrender and obedience. The age-old principle still stands: "Obey and live . . . disobey and die."

"Does the New Testament teach tithing?"

No, not as such. Aiding needy saints was commanded and practiced, but not in the form of tithes. Jesus, however, alluded to the paying of tithes as still binding on the Jews.

According to *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, "in New Testament times tithing was the orthodox procedure among the Pharisees (Luke 18:12). Jesus chided them for their minute exactness in regard to the lesser details of the tithing law, in contrast to their disregard for the inner and more important virtues of justice, mercy and faith (Matt. 23:23). But he also taught that the tithe, as well as other Old Testament institutions of divine origin, was binding on the Jews of his day (Luke 11:42). The doom pronounced on the foolish rich man (Luke 12: 13—21) was in part due to his lack of giving (v. 18) as an acknowledgment of God's ownership and man's stewardship."

In an explanatory note preceding the listing of verses on the tithe in Cruden's Concordance is found the following: "In the New Testament, neither our Saviour, nor His apostles have commanded anything in this affair of tithes." • •

Booklets to Aid your Bible Study

HISTORY OF THE MEGIDDO MISSION
THE COMING OF JESUS AND ELIJAH
WHAT MUST WE DO TO BE SAVED?
GOD'S SPIRITUAL CREATION
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Meditations on the Word

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which you must search out about yourself and, however humbling or self-condemning it may turn out to be, you cannot be a good and upright man until you have found yourself out. Your friend may have forgotten you at some occasion, or preferred someone else before you. He may have used his own judgment in some matter where you demanded to dictate to him. Or, he may have received a promotion, or praise, or reward, that you had not humility and love enough to endure.

Track out your heart, sir; your future destiny depends upon it! That wicked heat in your heart, that hateful look in your eye—purge it out!

A little self-esteem in a young man's heart is not very much to be suspected or denounced. But wait and see. A little lump of leaven in a woman's hand does not look like much either. Let a person set out in life with a lump of self-esteem in his secret heart, and if the unavoidable experiences of opposition and collisions of life, together with the grace of God, do not chasten and subdue it, he will end his days full of self-righteousness and pride.

On the other hand, humility or disesteem of a man's self is like good leaven in a good man's heart. True humility does not consist in having a worse opinion of ourselves than we deserve. As all virtue is founded in truth, so humility is founded in a true knowledge of our weakness and sin.

Though the parable of leaven, working as evil in men's hearts, is used by Jesus only concerning the Pharisaic hypocrisy and self-esteem, and by Paul concerning malice, it is equally true of all other evil leavenings that plague the human heart. A little leaven of pride—ponder its subtlety, with home-coming illustrations, for yourself. A little of the leaven of anger—think of that as you have seen it in your own heart. A little of the leaven of suspicion, or jealousy and envy—think that out for yourself, with illustrations and instances taken from your own experiences. A little of the leaven of sensuality, of evil thoughts, of foolishness, etc., think of the deplorable results from minute beginnings! Think of the evils that might never have matured had beginnings been stopped!

Often during Jesus' ministry He would pause, and, as if asking some of them to help Him out on a great subject, He would say to the people, "Where-to shall I liken the Kingdom of God?" Then, when no answer came, He would relate to them a parable. And He would leave it with them to think it out for themselves. So with these thoughts we leave this parable of leaven with you to think further of its workings, for evil and for good. • •

MEGIDDO MESSAGE:



Meditations

On the Word

LEAVEN IS A soured and salted substance that produces fermentation, especially in dough, as yeast or fermenting dough. In progressive countries where a bread wagon stops daily at resident's doors, the sight of leaven working is not witnessed to such an extent as it was in olden days. It was once an essential procedure in every home and, seeing its strange workings, it is not surprising that leaven, from antiquity, has also come to be regarded as any element or influence which, working silently and strongly, causes change.

Jesus used the illustration of leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal (Matt. 13:33), to teach the lesson of the Word of God working in the hearts of men through the various epochs of time until all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest (Hab. 2:14). Jesus also referred to leaven in a different sense. He warned the disciples of the erroneous doctrines and vicious practices of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matt. 16:6, 12); the corrupt glosses of the law, the doctrines of traditions, invented and promoted by the Pharisees, which, like leaven, are not only sour, but also contagious and infectious in nature. The leaven of the Pharisees was something hidden and inward; its work was secret till it worked its way through their whole heart and character. They were the Pharisees who were bent on our Lord's death.

But Paul likens sin and sinners to the workings of leaven. Persons with evil characteristics can enter among believers and by their insidiousness can pollute the whole society. The comparison is obvious. As a little leaven produces astounding results, so a little sin can grow secretly until the harm it causes is incalculable. Purge it out, he

says, don't gloss it over, don't conceal it! And he adds, "Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (I Cor. 5:8).

What is the leaven of malice? We may know the answer, for undoubtedly we have felt it within ourselves, and may have suffered from the effects of it in others. If we try to disguise it, and avoid seeing it in ourselves, we can never purge it out. Nor shall we keep it purged out until we face it squarely.

Malice is like leaven. Its first beginning is so small as not to be worth mentioning. It begins in a most common manner. You do not like someone, it may be in school, in the office, in the workshop, in the home. That is the first half-ounce of the leaven of malice. Then your actions and feelings toward that individual, and your thoughts and words about him, are like leaven at work in your heart. First it is just dislike—at first. But it grows into hatred and from there the way is open for every evil. That which started out as dislike and a secret grudge now develops into ill-will, resentment, and revenge, until in God's sight it is very murder itself! It is while this red-handed murder is still in its early stages of dislike and animosity that Paul pleads with you to purge it out.

In order to purge out the leaven of malice, one needs to get to the cause of the trouble. Search it out as with a candle in a dark corner. Your self-investigation may be in this manner: You have a neighbor, who may at one time have been a friend.

He may never suspect but that he is still a friend, and may be befriending you all the time. But at heart you are no more his friend. Something has happened

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"Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump" (I Corinthians 5: 6, 7).

A Prayer

*O that mine eyes might closed be
To what concerns me not to see;
That deafness might possess mine ear
To what concerns me not to hear;
That truth my tongue might always tie
From ever speaking foolishly;
That no vain thought might ever rest
Or be conceived within my breast;
That by each deed and word and tho't
Glory may to my God be brought.*

*But what are wishes! Lord, mine eye
On Thee is fixed; to Thee I cry!
Wash, Lord, and purify my heart,
And make it clean in every part;
And when 'tis clean, Lord, keep it, too,
For that is all I seek to do.*