

The AND Staff

"Preach the Word." (II Timothy 4:2)

"Feed the Flock." (I Peter 5:2)

• By VICTOR KNOWLES

Post Office Box 452—West Concord, Minnesota 55985

• *"Neither accuse any falsely" (Luke 3:14). "For men shall be... false accusers" (II Timothy 3:2, 3).*

WHAT ARE PEOPLE ACCUSED OF?

SOMETIMES Christians are accused of exhibiting a "holier-than-thou" attitude. Other Christians are charged with not being holy enough and so they are accused of "worldliness." Some are accused of being "narrow-minded" while others are accused of being "broad-minded."

► Excuse Me, But Did You Accuse Me?

At times the critics say that Christians don't emphasize love enough. But others might accuse them of being too "loving." Some are accused of being too "weak" and others of being too "strong." The accusation of being a "liberal" is hurled at some while others are branded as "legalists."

HOW SHOULD I REACT WHEN FALSELY ACCUSED?

An "accusation" is a "charge of wrong." First of all, when accused of wrongdoing, examine yourself (II Corinthians 13:5). *Am I narrow-minded? Have I been self-righteous?* Even though many accusations are false and should not be made, it is good for us to look into our own lives and check up on ourselves. Second, if falsely accused, don't retaliate! When Jesus was reviled, He did not revile in return (I Peter 2:23). One false accusation does not deserve another. We only lower ourselves when we resort to such. Third, live a conscientious life. "Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good manner of life" (I Peter 3:16). The best answer to a false accusation is a continued example of a consistent, conscientious life. Fourth, remain silent. While some accusations are outlandish as to not deserve a reply, they are best answered by doing or saying nothing. Jesus practiced this. "And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marveled greatly" (Matthew 27:12-14). Fifth, defend yourself. There are times when it might be best to defend your-

self against a false accusation. Much prayer and discretion should be used. On one occasion Tertullus accused Paul of several things, and Paul made a conscientious defense of himself (Acts 24:2-16).

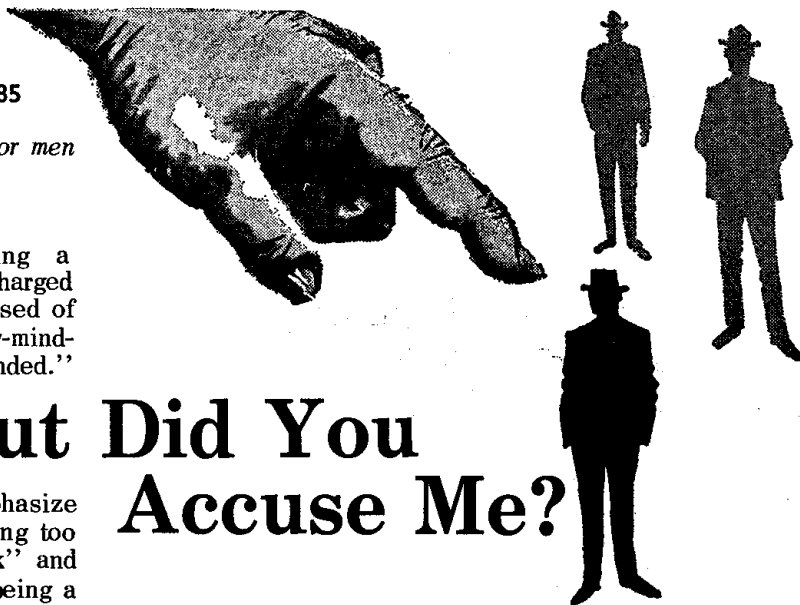
WHY DO PEOPLE ACCUSE OTHERS?

There are times when false accusations were made, and the accuser was sincerely mistaken. The accuser's motives might have been entirely pure no matter how off base the accusation was. This only shows, however, how careful we ought to be in whatever we say (Matthew 12:36; Colossians 3:17).

Many false accusations are made by people who are suspicious of others. This was King Saul's serious problem. His suspicion that David was trying to unseat him from the throne led to all kinds of accusations and even acts of violence. Ungodly suspicion leads to all kinds of false accusations in the home. Often parents falsely accuse their children of things the children did not do. Youth are suspicious of their elders and vice versa. The result is a raft of false suspicions and an ever-widening "generation gap." It is better to trust someone and be wrong than be suspicious of someone and be proved right. "Love thinketh no evil" (I Corinthians 13:5).

More often than not false accusations are made by those who are guilty of the very same thing they are ac-

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Proverbs of Today

People who have short fuses should not play with matches.

"A little dog is more inclined to snarl at a big one than the other way around; and this holds true for more than dogs."

Emphasis upon unity and fellowship without emphasis upon truth, purity, and setting the church in order will prove disastrous to the church of Christ.

"Attendance does not mean one is a faithful Christian, but a willful absence means that he is unfaithful."

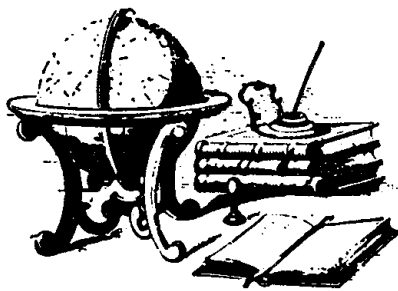
If you love righteousness you will hate sin (and not be offended when it is preached against).

"Don't mistake arrogance for wisdom; many people think they are wise when they are only windy."

Yelling at children is a poor substitute for discipline.

"When we have done what we can, God will do what we can't."

If we can't get the Lord's work done with the simple organization of the church (local) which he has left, and must form other organizations to do it, maybe the work we are doing is something he did not intend for the church to do.



EDITORIAL

COMMENTS...

THE HUMAN BODY

THERE ARE many marvelous facts and features about the human body. The following tidbits of information have been gleaned from various sources.

The average human body is made up of around nine or ten trillion cells in the form of several different complicated systems, yet integrated into one functioning unit. Among many other things, the body is a complicated chemical processing plant. Professor E. C. Dobbs of the University of London wrote: "It is rather a terrifying thought that the whole of the protein in the human body is replaced in roughly 160 days, and at the present time we can only speculate on the mechanism controlling this elaborate re-synthesis, where even a single amino acid must not be out of place if the hormone is to have its activity or the antibody its potency."

This body is self-repairing and contains a complex alarm system. It has a protective jacket called the skin which repels and even kills some germs—at the same time it is a thermostat and a stock-room. The body has the amazing power to reproduce itself in offspring.

The marvelous instrument known as the heart pumps five thousand gallons of blood a day, supplying some 12,000 miles of circulatory system, and in the average lifetime the heart may beat over 2½ billion times.

To equal the human brain it would take a computer larger than the Empire State Building.

We can only pity the man who has an irrational and blind faith in the empty theory of evolution, believing this all came about by chance, and with the Psalmist of old we are made to exclaim: "I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well" (Psalms 139:14).

EDITORIAL

By-Ways

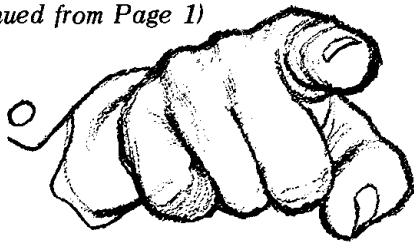
COMMENTS ON BIBLE LANDS TOUR

AFTER SOME changing of dates, March 12-22 was finally the date of our Bible lands tour. The tour included Egypt, the region of ancient Moab and Edom (east and southeast of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea), and the land of Israel. Serving as a tour host, I was able to take my whole family on this exciting trip. With the brethren

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EXCUSE ME, BUT DID YOU ACCUSE ME?

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cusing others of! Potiphar’s wife accused Joseph of the sin she had already committed in her mind and had tried to get him to participate in (Genesis 39:12-17). Ahab accused Elijah of bringing trouble to Israel when, in fact, it was he himself who was responsible for it (I Kings 18:17). Have you ever accused someone of being proud when you were guilty of that very sin in your own life? We tend to accuse others of sins that are prevalent in our own lives because it lessens our guilt feelings to know that others might be guilty of the same. But that does not make it right. “Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?” (Romans 2:22).

Closely aligned with guilt is the matter of self-aggrandizement. We accuse others of things to make ourselves look good or better than we really are. We knock others down to elevate ourselves. We try to improve our station in life by accusing others falsely so that they will decrease and we will increase. Jezebel had Naboth falsely accused so she could obtain his vineyard for her husband (I Kings 21:1-16).

Envy and jealousy cause a great share of the false accusations that are made. The chief priests accused Jesus of many things but Pilate “knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy” (Mark 15:3, 10). People who are in the limelight or have attained some high position by hard work will often be falsely accused by those little souls who are envious and jealous.

Outright hatred has been responsible for false accusations. The scribes and Pharisees so hated Jesus that they watched his every move “that they might find an accusation against him” (Luke 6:7). Those of the synagogue hated Stephen so much that they persuaded others to make false accusations against him which resulted in Stephen’s murder (Acts 6:9-14).

HOW TO OVERCOME THE SIN OF FALSE ACCUSATION

One way to overcome this problem (if you have it) is to remember what the *source* of all false accusation is. According to Revelation 12:10, it is the devil! “Satan... was cast out... and I heard a voice saying... the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.” How can brethren make accusations against fellow brethren when they know that the devil is the source of this heinous sin?

Jude tells us that Michael the archangel did not dare to bring a “railing accusation” against the devil but rather said, “The Lord rebuke thee” (Jude 9). Peter informs us that angels, “which are greater in power and might,” do not bring “railing accusations” against ungodly men (II Peter 2:11). It has been said that fools rush in where angels fear to tread. How true this is in the matter of accusing others!

The Old Testament has several warnings about false accusations that would be good for us to consider. “Thou

shalt not raise a false report” (Exodus 23:1). “Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people” (Leviticus 19:16). “Six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him... a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren” (Proverbs 6:16, 19). God, in his divine Word, has always prohibited false accusation. Don’t be a party to it neither by speaking or listening.

Some folk try to justify accusing others by saying, “but, it’s true!” If it is, then you have the responsibility of going to that person *alone* and trying to make things right (Matthew 18:15-17). We usually make accusations (whether true or not is immaterial) about a brother or a sister to everyone in the church before we ever go to that brother or sister. What a violation of the sacred Scriptures!

Remembering that restitution must be made after an accusation has been proven to be false should keep us from ever making false accusations. Little Zacchaeus gives us a big lesson when we read his words: “If I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore fourfold” (Luke 19:8). Have you ever made things right with someone you have once accused after the accusation was proven to be false? Is it fair to leave that old accusation lingering in the air?

If you really want to overcome this sinful problem then try to accuse people of *good*! We are prone to accuse others of evil. Try making *true* accusations. Accuse others of doing good works, of being kind, of living a charitable life. This is one accusation you can make behind their backs! Go to it!

One of the greatest stories in the Bible can help you overcome the temptation to accuse others. One day the scribes and Pharisees brought an adulteress to Jesus. They did this so that they might have a reason to accuse Jesus of failing to uphold the law of Moses (John 8:3-6). But Jesus simply said, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.” It wasn’t long until those men were gone. They were all convicted by their own guilty consciences. Jesus asked the woman where her accusers were. Had any of them condemned her? She replied that none had. And Jesus told her, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more” (John 8:11). How many times have we hurled the heavy stones of false accusation at others when all the while we ourselves were filled with sin—perhaps the very sin we accused others of? May the fact of our own sinfulness cause us to drop our stones of false accusation. May we, from the oldest to the youngest, leave the rock-throwing arena of false accusation with our heads hanging in shame and our cheeks blushing crimson. May we, too, “go, and sin no more.” □

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DAY BY DAY

*I heard a voice at evening softly say,
Bear not thy yesterday into tomorrow,
Nor load this week with last week’s load of sorrow.
Lift all thy burdens as they come, not try
To weigh the present with the by and by
One step, and then another, take thy way—
Live day by day.*

Anonymous

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EDITORIAL BY-WAYS

(Continued from Page 2)

who lead the tour and their number, our tour group came to 34 people (I was glad and thankful to be able to furnish 19 of the people who went on this tour). This was my second trip over, but it proved to be just as interesting and worthwhile (perhaps even more so).

Egypt: OBSERVATION, INFORMATION AND REFLECTION

Such a tour, and especially to Bible lands, always creates an air of excitement and expectancy. Having never been to Egypt before, I was especially looking forward to this. As has been well-stated long ago, Egypt is the gift of the Nile. If it weren't for the Nile River there would be no Egypt. Flowing for hundreds and hundreds of miles from the heart of Africa, the Nile salvages a thin strip of land along its banks from the parched desert. Flying over it one can see the thin ribbon of green along the Nile, in some places as narrow as one mile, with the massive, "omnipresent" desolation on either side. Although the days are hot in Egypt, the presence of the desert makes for rather cool (almost cold) nights.

About four hundred or so miles up the Nile, we visited Luxor and the Valley of the Kings. This area is identified as Thebes, one of the ancient capitol of Egypt. On the east banks of the Nile here are found the impressive ruins of the Karnak temple. I understand the beginning of the temple dates back to about 2500 B.C., and different Pharaohs added to it as time passed and as the local "deity" Amun-Ra became more prominent. It finally covered about 150 acres and included the famous Hypostyle Hall of Columns (regarded among the great wonders of the ancient world). Across the Nile on the rugged

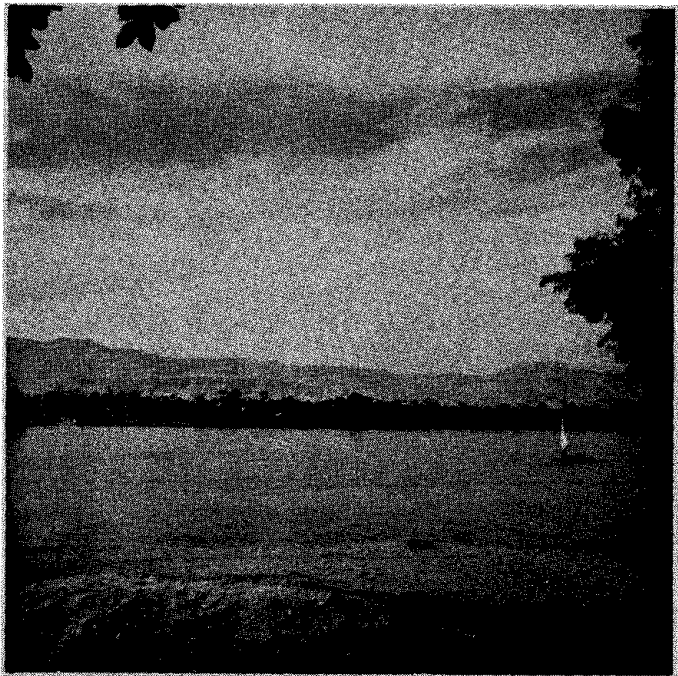
single tomb was a virtual "Fort Knox." Thus, they became the targets of grave robbers. Even in later years when the country fell upon hard times, it was not beyond the dignity of the government itself to plunder the tombs. The tomb of "King Tut," discovered in 1922, is the only



(Statue of Panejem, son-in-law of the high-priest, found in the ruins of the massive temple at Karnak)

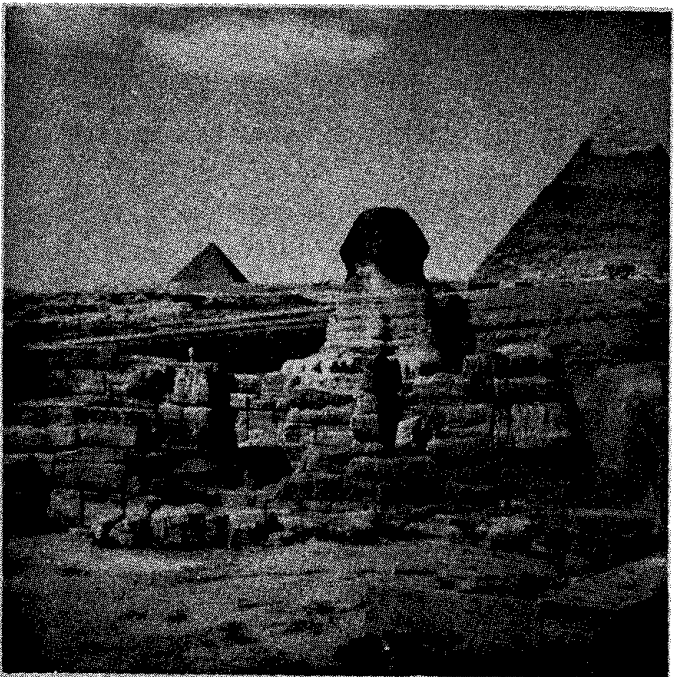
tomb that has been found unmolested. The riches were still intact. It was an impressive experience to see all of these things. I understand that the capitol at Thebes is to be identified with the time of Moses.

Then going back to Cairo, where we first landed in Egypt, we visited the Great Pyramids of Gizeh (on the



(Looking westward across the Nile River from Luxor toward the Valley of the Kings, burial place of many pharaohs)

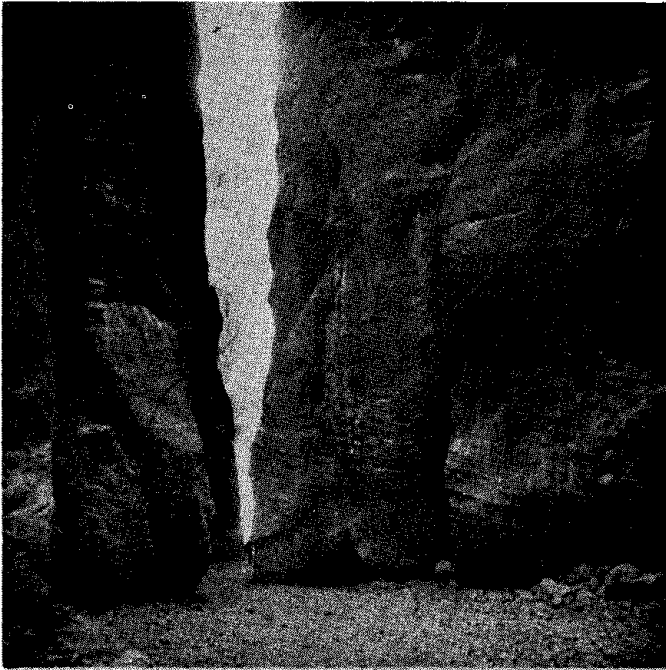
fringe of the desert is to be found the Valley of the Kings. Sixty-four tombs have been found here, and it was used as the burial grounds by the Pharaohs for at least 400 years beginning after the 16th century B.C., I understand. The riches of the Pharaohs were buried with them, and a



(The Spinx and the second and third pyramids of the Great Pyramids of Gizeh—first pyramid not visible in picture)

west side of the Nile across from Cairo). The first pyramid is the burial place of Khufu (or Cheops), who was the second Pharaoh of the fourth dynasty of united Egypt (2723-2563 B. C.). The second pyramid is that of Cheops' son, Pharaoh Khafra (or Chephren), and the last one is that of Menkaura (there being three pyramids in the Great Pyramids of Gizeh group). We visited all of them close hand and went up into the first one, that of Cheops. The Great Pyramid of Cheops is said to cover 13 acres, is 451 feet tall, and contains an estimated 2,300,000 stone blocks averaging 2½ tons each. The ancient Greek historian Herodotus said it took 100,000 workers 20 years to build it. Today the outward casing of this pyramid has been remove to furnish already quarried stones for the buildings of Cairo. Near the Great Pyramids is to be found the Spinx facing the rising of the sun; also, the ruins of a mortuary temple. It is amazing that man in the early days of antiquity could accomplish such building feats. Furthermore, Pharaoh must have been some kind of deity in the eyes of the people to get them to do this. Just how did the everyday man fit into the picture?

Although we shivered in the chilly night, the "light and sound production" of the Great Pyramids of Gizeh

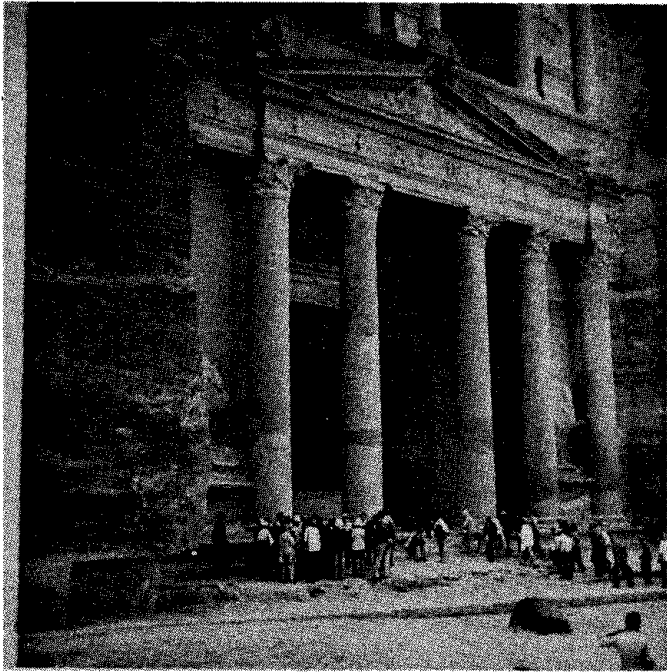


(Narrow pass going into the rose-tinted city of Petra, Mt. Seir of the Old Testament—a city carved from the sandstone rock)

was very impressive. As the different hues of light majestically spotlighted the pyramids and the Spinx in the open night sky, voices came from different loud speakers situated in the proximity of the pyramids dramatically highlighting much of the history associated with them. However, the narrative writer got a little carried away when he spoke of the pyramids as the hope of the resurrection. This created a very negative response in me. The futility of it all if these dilapidated structures of man's vanity represented my hope of the resurrection and immortality! My hope of the resurrection has to do with another tomb found elsewhere—found outside the walls of the city of Jerusalem. It was found empty, not because grave robbers plundered the tomb in search of riches and a mummy was thereafter found missing (as was likely the case with Cheops), but because Jesus Christ the Son of God was

raised from the dead to die no more! His resurrection was witnessed by many people. Unbelievers became believers. He purposely became the firstfruits of those who "slept." Because he lives I, too, shall live—not because of a lost mummy in a desecrated tomb! And not because of an impressive pile of stones heaped together in a symmetrical way by forced labor!

(And another thought in passing: The religion of the Old Testament is as unlike Egyptian mythology as day is unlike night. Moses did not get his ideas about religion from Egypt. Theirs was a polytheistic religion of many



(Emerging through the long and narrow pass to Petra, the first sight to strike ones eyes—and carved right in the mountain)

mixtures wherein the elements of nature were deified. The Old Testament religion is lacking the morbid preoccupation with death that characterized that of Egypt. The purity of the religion of Moses makes one conclude that he could only have gotten it from God.)

Present-day Egypt must be classed as one of the undeveloped nations of the world, having many poor people. I understand that the average annual income is about \$280 per person. The wealth of the Pharaohs of old and the poverty of the people today makes quite a contrast. Their situation is very different from what we find in this country (U. S. A.). They are a thickly populated country, compressed into the habitable area along the Nile and in the Delta, with Cairo having nine million people (the largest city in Africa). Their country is limited in natural resources, but I also got the impression that their religion was a drawback to their development as a modern, progressive nation. I only have tender feelings for their situation.

Visiting Egypt was a most interesting experience that I would like to repeat, the Lord willing, sometime in the future.

EAST OF THE JORDAN RIVER

Our tour east of the Jordan River was all new territory to the others and myself. Some of us had been to Israel proper before, but not here. We stayed in the city of Am-

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“What Is That In Thy Hand?”



• By RICHARD E. TUCKER

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*A baby's hands in Bethlehem were small and softly curled.
But held within their dimpled grasp the hope of half the world.*

*A carpenter's hands in Nazareth were skilled with tool and wood;
They laid the beams of simple homes and found their labor good.*

*A healer's hands in Galilee were stretched to all who came.
For him to cleanse their hidden wounds or cure the blind and lame.*

*Long, long ago the hands of Christ were nailed upon a tree,
But still their holy touch redeems the hearts of you and me.*

ONCE GOD asked Moses this question, “What is that in thy hand?” God had a reason for the question. He was not seeking information because God already knew. He wanted Moses to know it was no mere stick but an instrument. If he dedicated his life to God it could be used in ways far beyond the imagination of man to conceive. We want to recycle this question and ask it of God, in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. “Jesus, what is that in thy hand?” The Bible mentions a number of things that are in the hands of Christ, and I would like to draw your attention to several of them.

I. THE SCEPTRE IS IN HIS HAND.

Hebrews 1:8—“But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, And the sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.” We see in Jesus’ hand a sceptre. The sceptre is the symbol of authority. It identified the king. By it he showed his power to bless or damn. The opening words of Hebrews introduces Jesus as the sovereign Lord of the entire universe. Listen carefully to the passage. “God...hath...spoken unto us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

The prophets of the Old Testament had looked down through the hallways of history, and they saw Jesus. How did they see Him? He was revealed mainly in two ways. The suffering of Christ and the glory of Christ. Isaiah 9:6—“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth ever for ever.” The prophet Daniel saw the day coming when the sceptre would be placed in his hands. Daniel 7:13, 14—“I saw in the night visions, and behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of



days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.” Pilate asked Jesus if He were a king. Was He or wasn't He? Yes, He is the king of His kingdom—a spiritual kingdom, not of this world. He says so to His faithful followers in Matthew 28:18, “All authority has been given unto me in heaven and on earth...” If He has all authority, how much do I have? How about you? How about any man? Thus it is unreasonable to think that man in any capacity could be the head of the church or king of the kingdom. Man is limited by his frailties; his sins and immoralities would only bring shame upon the kingdom.

Ephesians 1:22, 23—“...The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory...put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.” We ought to be so thankful and grateful to God. What loving care over His people is expressed by Jesus when He tells of holding the sceptre in His hand in our behalf. Listen to this marvelous message, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who hath given them unto me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.”

The day is coming when every knee shall bow before his sceptre. His name will be confessed by every tongue. His sovereign kingdom shall be seen by every eye. And all shall exclaim that He is the Lord! “Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” The day is soon coming when the revelation given to John will take place.” And the seventh angel sounded: and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world is become the king-

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EDITORIAL BY-WAYS

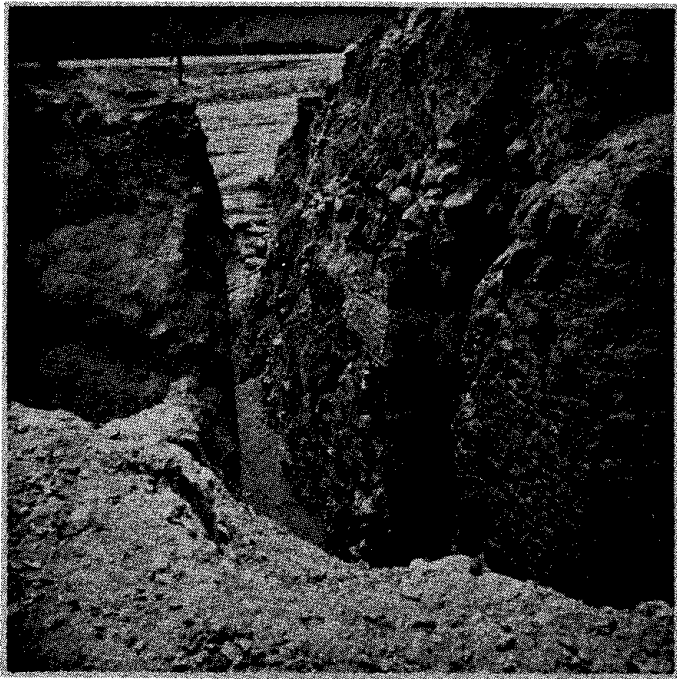
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man, the city to be remembered from Old Testament times as the place where King David had Uriah killed in the front line of battle so he could get his wife. We were able to look across the Jordan and the Dead Sea from the heights identified as Mt. Nebo (the place where Moses got to view the Promised Land and then to pass on in death). The hazy day didn't permit us to see much from this barren mountain top. The trip to Petra was a long one by bus, but well worth it. I was in for a surprise on the terrain of Biblical Moab and Edom. It was rough country, but not as bad as I thought it would be. There was much table-land and even farming.

Our trip to Petra was really a highlight of the tour. Petra is located about half the way between the Dead Sea and the Red Sea, west of the highway going to the Red Sea port of Aqaba. It was an ancient city that was literally hewn out of the sides of the sandstone mountains and was entered by a very narrow pass (which we went into by horseback). In the Old Testament it is identified as Mt. Seir or Sela of the land of Edom. In New Testament times, although not mentioned in the Scriptures, it was called Petra; and was capitol of the Nabataean kingdom. It is most impressive to see the temples and tombs carved right out of the rose-tinted, living sandstone (right in the face of the mountain). To descend for about an hour down this narrow trail (mostly hidden from the sun) and then suddenly to emerge from the razor-thin pass upon this unexpected sight is breathtaking to say the least; especially if it is at the right time of day. One would not expect to find such a place in the middle of a desert.

SUMMARY OF ISRAEL TOUR

Most of the places we visited in Israel I had seen before. Among those I had seen before, and we visited again, were Jericho, Qumran, Jerusalem, Bethany, Bethlehem, Hebron, Sychar, Samaria, Megiddo, Tiberias, Capernaum,



(In the excavated ruins of ancient Jericho a burned layer identified with the time of Joshua and the conquest of Canaan)

Nazareth, Acre, Haifa, Caesarea, Joppa, and Tel Aviv. All of these places are very worthwhile to tour. All of Israel is Bible-related, which makes for much interest and profit in touring for the Bible student.

Some new places I got to visit this time included En-gedi, Beersheba, the Herodium, Mamre, and Cana. Stopping at the oasis of En-gedi (on the edge of the Dead Sea), and following the little stream up to where it spilled out of the rugged rocks, proved to be a pleasant interlude. This is where David hid out from King Saul. The Bible tells us that King Saul took 3,000 men and "went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats" at En-gedi (I Samuel 24:1,2). There, almost 3,000 years later, we saw wild goats on the rocks of En-gedi! That was really something! Then, I was in for a surprise in reference to Beersheba. I knew it was located in the southern part of Israel in the edge of the desert, and I expected to find little here. But there was a thriving modern city, in all appearance. Here we saw one of Abraham's wells.

Needless to say, everyone who went on this Bible lands has profited much from it.

ANOTHER TOUR PLANNED FOR 1979

Perhaps you have wanted to take such a tour to Bible lands, but just haven't gotten around to it yet. Well, a March 1979 tour is now in the planning stage. Plans are for this tour to include Rome, Greece, ancient Constantinople, the area of the seven churches in Asia and other scenes of Paul's labors in Asia Minor—as well as the land of Palestine (Israel). The Lord willing, I plan to be one of the tour hosts again and help get the people together to go. Let me know of your interest in this tour, and when printed materials and prices are available, I will send them on to you and keep you posted about developments. Begin making your plans now for this exciting and worthwhile tour of a lifetime. □

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"WHAT IS THAT IN THY HAND?"

(Continued from Last Page)

dom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever"—Revelation 11:15. John further saw Him riding in triumph "and he hath on his garment and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

Have you accepted Jesus as Lord? Some folk want Him as Saviour. Some want Him as Healer. Some want Him as provider of daily bread. Some want Him as the answerer of prayers. Some want Him as a friend. But your Bible says He must be accepted as Lord. You must bow down before Him! You must be willing to do everything He demands. You must say, "Here am I, send me." You must be willing to say anything He requests of you. Is this the way you have let Him into your heart, as King of Kings and Lord of Lords? Read this passage from Romans 10:9,10—"Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

When Jesus was on trial, they mocked His Lordship. They placed a purple robe, a kingly garment upon Him—

(Continued on Next Page)

“WHAT IS THAT IN THY HAND?”*(Continued from Last Page)*

but only as a show, a sport. They plaited a crown of thorns and crowned Him but only to injure and hurt. They placed a sceptre in His hands—but it was only a limber piece of grass. They crucified their Lord, but they knew it not. We read that story, and we are ashamed for them. But Jesus' question is just as piercingly put to us in Luke 6:46, “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” You cannot say you have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ if you do not do what the Bible teaches, for it is His word to us. You cannot refuse to wear His name, give of your tithes and offerings, be baptized into Christ, be present each Sunday at the Lord's table, forsake the assembly, or any other thing He demands, and still say you have accepted the Saviour as Lord of your life. Matthew 7:21-23—“Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity.”

II. THE FAN IS IN HIS HAND.

Matthew 3:12—“Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing floor; and he will gather his wheat into the garner, but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.” Some people think Jesus is okay until they come to the subject of his wrath. They do not like to think of Him as the judge upon the throne. They do not like to think He is going to cast lost sinners into Hell and that forever. Jesus is all right they think, except for His wrath against sinners. They treat this as a defect in the character of Christ. They speak of it apologetically. They thank God for His love, His mercy, His death on the cross, His goodness, His blessing—but never, never for His anger. Even as God is love—not has love—but Love is the essence of God. So God is described as a “consuming fire.” Not that God has wrath but that wrath is part of God.

The fan is a winnowing fork, an instrument by which the thresher separated the good from the bad, the useful from the useless. The people to whom John the baptizer was speaking thought that being right with God consisted of being born into the proper Hebrew family. He reminded them that Jesus could turn a stone into a child of Abraham. That was no problem to Him, for He had created them both anyway. Their problem was that they did not understand that being right with God was through repentance. They must quit their sins. Their lives must show that their hearts were right with God. John said that they were merely chaff if they did not bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. The chaff is not to be understood as equal to the tares in another parable. The chaff must be separated from the wheat. Once the Lord said to Peter, “Simon, Simon, behold Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: but I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not, and do thou, when once thou hast turned again, establish thy brethren.” Peter would find out, and that soon, whether or not he was chaff or wheat. He would be sifted. Peter's trial was soon coming. He was given adequate opportunity to confess His faith in Christ. But he failed. Did the failure mean that he was through as a disciple, an apostle, a saint? Did it mean that he would

not now be given the keys of the kingdom? He would yet be given an opportunity to return to Christ. He must not fail when Jesus asked him, “Lovest thou me?” How did he establish the brethren? Listen to him as later he writes it down in a book for all the brethren of the Lord. “Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold trials, that the proof of your faith being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial among you, which cometh upon you to prove you, as though a strange thing happened unto you: but inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation of his glory also ye may rejoice with exceeding joy.”

Paul reminds us that we must build a clean church in I Corinthians 3:10-15. We must not build the chaff upon the one true foundation. We must build with quality material—the gold, silver and precious gems. Size and numbers are not enough IF the church is made up of chaff. It must be the sifted wheat. In I Corinthians 5 we as Christians are instructed, “It is actually reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles, that one of you hath his father's wife...deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” The fan is in His hand! The chaff must be winnowed. The wheat must be saved. The church must be clean. Jesus teaches us, “Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are raving wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every tree bringeth forth good fruit; but the corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

We have a true story in the book of Acts. It demonstrates what we are talking about, that the FAN IS IN HIS HAND. He is in complete sovereign charge of His church. He shall (NOT might) separate the chaff from the wheat. You can read this account in the fifth part of the book of Acts. It concerns a man and his wife. In response to a specific need, many of the followers of Christ were selling their property and goods and giving the proceeds to the church to feed hungry people. This husband and wife in imitation of others sold a possession. They in turn lied to God and the Holy Spirit. They claimed they sold the property for a certain stipulated sum and that their gift represented the complete selling price. They did not have to give anything. But what they did give must be a cheerful, honest, freewill offering. But they kept part and said the contribution was the entire amount. Jesus did not want hypocrites in His church. He would not tolerate these liars. They were chaff. His judgment was swift in coming. They deserved what they got. Vengeance belongs to God, and He will recompense. This He did to them. This He shall do to all who are not true believers and followers of Christ. We cannot play church. We must be sincere with God. Jesus is not playing games with us. Our openness with God is absolutely demanded. How will you stand when you experience the winnowing of Christ? If God would call you into account today, would you be wheat in His barn (heaven) or would you be cast as chaff

into the unquenchable fire (hell)? You cannot deceive Him. Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.

III. THE CUP IS IN HIS HAND.

This is a familiar metaphor and is found several times in Scripture. Job 21:20 — "And let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty." Isaiah 51:17; Obadiah 16; Psalms 75:8.

What is in this cup? What does it contain? It holds, according to Revelation 14:10, "the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of His anger; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb..." In the picture painted by the Psalmist (75:8) there are several features that deserve our attention. In this cup the contents are seen as *foaming*; this picture illuminates for us the activity of the contents. The wrath of God "slumbereth not." Because God does not call you into account the very moment you sin as He did Adam and Eve does not mean you shall never be called into judgment. God's longsuffering should not be misunderstood. While God is unwilling that any should perish, this should not be misconstrued to mean that they shall not perish. God's patience with us ought to lead us to repentance but if it does not, then we must drink that awful cup ourselves. The Psalmist also tries to teach us that the wrath of God is *stored up*. Paul writes to the Roman church, "Treasurer up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God: who will render to every man according to his works." God remembers your sins (unless you are a Christian) and you will have to receive the wages of not just one of your sins but of them all. They are stored up in the cup! When the Psalm writer draws our attention to the dregs it means that *we must drink all of it*. Not just a part but we must taste it all. The entire terror of judgment and its effects will be felt by us if we do not repent and turn to God. What is in this cup that foams and ferments and is waiting to be consumed? Listen the words of another who has thought about this cup. "A sinner spewed out blasphemy; it settled in the cup. A rascal plucked the sweet flower of virtue from a woman's breast and watched it wither in the hot blast of his lust; it stirred in the cup! A loving mother was strangled by a drunken son; murder made its way to the cup. A degenerate snatched away a wee babe and dashed it upon the rocks; depravity found its place in the cup. Blackest deeds of nameless shame spawned in the pit of hell, all in the cup! Every breach of every law, every stain of every sin, all the smear of corruption and stench of debauch now mingled in the odious contents of the CUP."

The CUP is in His hands. The prophet wrote concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way, and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Jesus came to drink this awful cup for us. We see Him in the old olive orchard of Gethsemane in which He is in an agony. In such travail of soul does He pray that the chill of the night cannot absorb the sweat of His brow. A disciple, aroused from sleep, observes. Afterward it was written, "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down on the ground." His brow gleams crimson in the starlight that filters through the

branches of the olives. A crimson flow trickles through His beard and splashes upon His vesture. And what is the prayer that throws the Son of God upon His face in such agony of soul? Listen to it: "Father, if it be possible, let this CUP pass from me: nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt." It seems as though we can almost hear Him praying, "Father, I have never sinned. I have never tasted forbidden fruit. I have kept my record clean and pure. I am one with eternity and with Thee. Must I, who have never done wrong, drink this cup, polluted and vile? Must I, who am sinless become sin?" Yes, drink that awful cup, Lord Jesus! Drink it for poor perishing sinners. Drink it that sinners might have a Saviour. Drink it that whosoever will may drink of the fountain of the water of life! He must drink it that He "who knew no sin might be made to be sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God through Him." He must take the stroke that was our due! He must become sin in our behalf. The stored up wrath of God that is in that cup must be drunk by our Lord Jesus Christ. The foaming contents of that cup that show the active wrath of God must be placed in the hands of Jesus. We, who are sinners, press that cup to His holy lips! He must drink it for us. The cup is either in His hands or in ours. He drained it for you and for me! Have you ever knelt before Him and admitted that you are a sinner and asked Him to be merciful to you?

IV. THE WOUNDS ARE IN HIS HANDS.

Zechariah 13:6 — "And one shall say unto him, what are these wounds between thine arms? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." Dr. Dorington gives this account of crucifixion: "No wounds are more painful than those inflicted in crucifixion. They are at once what surgeons term punctured, lacerated, and are contused, which are the three most serious varieties of that species of injury, independently of the grave nature of the wounds themselves. Their danger is much increased when they occur in such parts as the palm of the hand, and the sole of the foot, in which bones and nerves and tendons, and their sheaths, predominate; tissues which, when so injured, reflect their mischief into the constitution immediately and most violently, given rise to unmanageable traumatic fever. In many very sensitive constitutions, the immediate shock of the act of crucifixion itself would hardly be rallied from. If however, the victim should have sufficient constitutional powers to support re-action, the intense agony produced by the weight of the body suspended on the raw parts in contact with the nails in the hands, and by the inflammatory swelling of the palms and the plantar tissues pressing against the unyielding iron, and the position of the body is one of the principal agents in the production of the exhaustion which terminates the frightful scene. If the sufferer lived many hours, the injured parts after ulcerating would become gangrenous; great depression of the vital powers would at once come on, with hic-cough and cold sweats; the circulation is hurried and feeble; the breathing short and frequent; and the patient would rapidly sink, the feeling of pain being lessened, but the sense of anxiety and prostration augmented to the last."

"The mode of execution was considered by the Romans as the basest and most ignominious death deserved only by traitors. Because it was the most lingering, the victim frequently surviving till the third day, and then dying of mere exhaustion. As soon as the sentence was passed, "Thou shalt be crucified," the person was stripped en-

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"WHAT IS THAT IN THY HAND?"

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tirely naked or possibly a narrow strip around the loins. The victim was then fastened to a post about as high as the waist, and was terribly scourged with rods or whips made of leather strips, armed with small bits of lead, iron, and some bone. This punishment was often so severe as to cause death. The cross was fixed into the earth and was from ten to fifteen feet high, so that the feet were from four to six feet from the ground. In or near the middle of the upright post was a projection to which the victim was raised by cords; and being previously divested of all his clothing he was first bound to the crossbeam and then nailed through his hands with strong iron spikes and then the feet were nailed likewise. Among the Romans the victim remained on the cross often until his body fell to the ground by its own weight. It is considered that the agonies of this death were so extreme that it was pronounced as the utmost torment possible. The extension of the limbs, just after so severe a scourging, and the impossibility of making the slightest change or motion without occasioning suffering; the piercing of the hands and feet in the parts most susceptible to the acute and agonizing pains; the exposure of the wounds and lacerated flesh to the action of the sun and air hour after hour; the loss of blood; the sense of indignity and contempt, which was the most bitter, malicious and unsparing that can be conceived; all conspired to make this mode of death the most to be dreaded of all modes of execution."

This is what Jesus Christ had to undergo for the redemption of man. We see the WOUNDS OF THE HANDS OF JESUS! We often sing this hymn together before we participate in the body and blood of Christ at the Lord's table:

*Wounded for me, wounded for me,
There on the cross he was wounded for me;
Gone my transgressions, and now I am free,
All because Jesus was wounded for me.*

*Dying for me, dying for me,
There on the cross he was dying for me;
Now in His death my redemption I see,
All because Jesus was dying for me.*

Please read this Bible verse with me: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and with his stripes we are healed" Isaiah 53:5. In Bible times Christians met every Sunday to partake of the emblems of the Lord's supper, the communion. Jesus wanted them (and us) to be continually reminded of the dying of our Saviour. When we reach out by faith and take the unleavened bread, we are saying, "Jesus, I have by faith accepted your broken body as my substitute upon the cross. I believe that you died for me. Your wounds were on my behalf." When, as an act of trust we reach out and take the cup, the fruit of the vine, we are saying that we believe that the blood of Jesus washes our sins away; that in this act we are having a participation in the blood of Jesus. This is one reason why the Hebrew writer urges us not to forsake the assembly because it is then that we are reminded again, fresh each week, that Jesus was wounded for us. What does the Lord's supper say to you? Jesus said this about it, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves." In the modern speech paraphrase of the New Testament, *Good News For Modern Man*, the so-called translators did not do us a favor when seemingly

studiously they undertook to remove the blood of Christ from the New Testament. No amount of rationalizing will compensate for the fact that in the many places they put another word where the Holy Spirit put the word BLOOD. Had the Spirit wanted another word He could easily have inspired the writers to use that word. We cannot so abuse the Bible and still get the meaning that the Holy Spirit wanted us to have.

The only recorded appearances of Jesus following the resurrection were always on Sunday, the Lord's day. On the first such appearance Thomas was absent. He had been disappointed. He adamantly exclaimed that unless "I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." A week later Jesus appeared again. He offered the man we call doubting Thomas a chance to believe by seeing and touching the wounds. But listen to the greater blessing you can have by accepting the wounded hands of Jesus by faith. "Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast seen me thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet believe."

V. THE KEYS ARE IN HIS HAND.

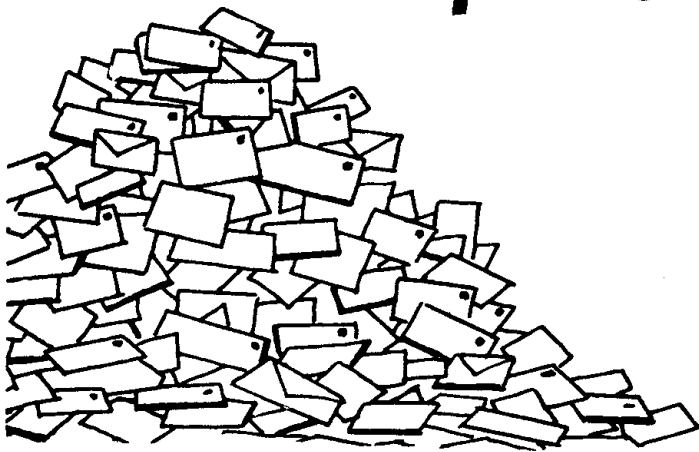
Revelation 1:17, 18—"I have the keys of death and hades." God created the first man, Adam, and placed him upon the earth in the center of a beautiful garden called Eden. Placed here God proscribed his life with only one thing, he must not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If he did, his Creator and Provident God warned him that he would die. Being seduced by the devil in the form of a talking serpent, God cast him out, and the processes of life and death were set in motion; and it was only a question of time until the scribe put beside the name of Adam, "and he died." But not only did Adam die, but all of the family of Adam must share with him the curse. Paul writes in Romans 5:12, "Therefore as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned." In 6:23 he writes under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." The one certain thing about life is that we must die. It is appointed unto man once to die and after this comes judgment. Paul again writes in the book of Hebrews, "He also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." So we behold in Jesus' hands the keys of death. He came to unlock the mysteries of the grave. He gave His life that we might live! "But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law: but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord." So we do indeed thank God for the Lord Jesus—He has set us free!

Listen to the victory note of promise Jesus gives to us: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life." An accomplished fact! The Christian shall never die! How we thank God for the unlocked mys-

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READERS'

... Response



VIRGINIA:

■ *"I just read 'Readers Response' in your June edition. I was sorrowed by the comments of the writer from North Carolina. It was just this type of despair turned inward that produced the denomination of the Disciples of Christ. This person has said in effect 'it makes no difference what you believe as long as you love one another.' In their weakness they are giving support to those who build calves at Bethel.*

If this person was really acting out of love as demonstrated by Christ, he would be pressing and supporting all those who are striving to remain pure and unspotted from the world. In attacking you as a separatist he obviously does not know the meaning of the word 'Holy' or 'Sanctified.' They have confused the words 'Meekness' and 'Weakness.'

They admit that the doctrines you hold to be true they also believe. However they selfishly refuse to contend for the faith that others might also come to know the truth and thereby be saved. Jesus did say 'if they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also' (John 15:19). When reading or talking to or about attitudes like this, I'm struck with the question, 'What's wrong in being right?'... Why must we apologize for striving against error and lawlessness in heavenly places?

I agree that at times we use the truth as a bludgeon and often unskillful but well meaning brothers and sisters will do more harm than good. I don't believe this has anything to do with the complaint of this person. I wonder who would have taken the Apostle Paul's place if he had succumbed to this attitude.

Please carry on your work of acting as a connecting link of those who care that the word of God is respected and kept pure from the pollutants of humanism. Let us pray for this person that he can extricate himself from the trap of the Devil and SEPARATE THEM BY THE TRUTH, GOD'S WORD IS TRUTH. (John 17:17)."

■ *"I have read quite a few good Christian papers but The SWORD AND STAFF tops them all. Keep up the good works and God bless you."*

INDIANA:

■ *"I enjoy your paper so very much. Words really can not express the good I get from reading it. It is always true*

to God's Divine Word and refreshing in its exposition."

COLORADO:

■ *"I am writing this note to thank you for the effort you have put into the tract 'What Must I Do to Be Saved?' I have used this tract many times with much success. I also want to thank you for the good things printed in THE SWORD AND STAFF. This paper has blessed my life many times and I always look forward to reading it each time it comes out."*

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"WHAT IS THAT IN THY HAND?"

(Continued from Last Page)

tery of the grave. The resurrection gospel is the hope of the saints. We believe in the return of Christ and the bodily resurrection of His disciples.

VI. THE WELCOME IS IN HIS HANDS.

Isaiah 65:2—"I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, that walk in a way that is not good, after their own thoughts..." After Adam had sinned the very first glimpse we get of God is that He is seeking a fallen sinner. That with open arms God is looking for him and trying to provide a way back home. And all through the Bible the picture of God is that God is love; God trying to seek and save the lost. We see Jesus with open arms as he cries, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden..." Thank God, this is true! He found people sick in their trespasses and sins and raised them to walk in newness of life. Jesus was indeed a friend of publicans and sinners. He ran across all sorts of people, and His hope for them was to transform their lives and make them so that they would go their way and sin no more. He found a woman of broken romances and tried to turn her life around. She had found the emptiness of trying to build her life upon a series of sexual encounters. Married five times and living with a man not her husband, it is very clear that she had failed to find happiness in this mad search. She was undoubtedly tired of the load of her sins. She needed the water of life more than she knew when she met Jesus at Jacob's well in Samaria. Jesus met a man named Zacchaeus who had tried to build his life on earthly riches. He was a publican who had heard about the Lord. He wanted to see him. His money could not and did not buy happiness for him, but only purchased a misery and a longing for God. Jesus saw him when others would have excluded him. Jesus took the good news into his home. Salvation came to his house. What money could not buy he received as a free gift from the personal hands of Jesus. The Saviour came into the world to seek and save the lost. Probably one of the most beautiful stories and the one we all can most identify with is the parable of the prodigal son. It shows us that the older brother represented the law. Legally the prodigal had no rights. He had squandered his inheritance. He had no right to the fatted calf, the family ring, the shoes, the father's house. He had used up his inheritance in wrong living. He had no claim at all. He himself admitted this when he said he was no longer worthy to be called "son," but perhaps the Father would hire him as a servant and he could take a servant's place. But in contrast to the older brother who represented legalism, the Father stands with welcome hands and shows to us grace. Unmerited favor! The world had turned him out but his own Father was there to welcome him back. Have you been received into the open arms of Jesus? It is your

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Materials You Can Use!

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"WHAT IS THAT IN THY HAND?" (Continued from Last Page)

choice to make. Look to the cross. There you see the bleeding hands of Jesus outspread to dying sinners to welcome them to the free grace of God. You had better run lest you arrive too late! Your family may turn against you, your worldly friends may abandon you, but there is God in the person of His Son who stands at the door of your heart and knocks and only waits for you to open it and let him in!

Hands of Jesus! Servants hands!
Stretched forth to meet all human needs;
Their touch the burning fever cools;
The leper at their touch is clean;
Deaf ears unstopped, dumb tongues release;
Their "mighty works" by all are seen.

Hands of Jesus! Seeking hands!
Stretched forth in love for mighty deeds.

Hands of Jesus! Suffering hands!
Stretched out upon the cruel tree;
From piercing spikes which hold them fast
The bright blood drop by drop doth fall,
Each drop declares sin "done away,"
And for pardon loud doth call.

Hands of Jesus! Mighty hands!
Which broke sin's bands and set us free!

Hands of Christ! Revealing hands!
Which made Him known as bread was given.
Ah, yes, they knew with opened eyes
Their risen Lord of Calvary,
"Behold my hands. 'Tis I," He said,
And led them forth to Bethany.

Hands of Christ! Uplifted hands!
Which blessed them as He rose to Heaven.

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