

The Sword AND Staff

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

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

The Superiority of the NEW Covenant



ments between man and man (religious or otherwise).

The Hebrew Word for Covenant

The Hebrew word for covenant in the Old Testament Scriptures is *berith*. Generally speaking, it means a solemn agreement between two parties, a treaty—or, as we would say today, a contract. The word is found almost 300 times in the Old Testament, and in the King James Version it is translated "covenant," "league," "be in league," and "confederacy." When it is used in reference to God and man, the covenant always originates with God and God sets the terms of the agreement. When the Greek version of the Old Testament Scriptures (the Septuagint, LXX) was made in the third century B. C., the Greek word *diatheke* was used to represent the Hebrew word for covenant. This version was commonly used by the Jews in the dispersion, and it was the one with which the Gentiles came in contact.

The New Testament Word for Covenant

When we come to the Greek New Testament, this Septuagint word for covenant is the one that is used. It really is not identical in meaning with the Hebrew word (*berith*) for covenant. *Diatheke* in the Greek world was a technical term with the limited meaning of a man's last will and testament. In the King James Version of the New Testament the word is translated COVENANT (20 times) and TESTAMENT (13 times). However, most scholars today it seems are of the opinion that all of the New Testament references should be translated covenant (in accordance with the Old Testament sense of the word), except for two places. These two places where they think it should be translated TESTAMENT (as a man's will) are Hebrews 9:16 and Galatians 3:15. In the Revised
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By JAMES E. GIBBONS — 1535 Fairfield Drive
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GENESIS 6:8 IS THE FIRST recorded use of the word "COVENANT" in the Bible. In view of the impending flood and destruction of the sinful world, God said to Noah, "But with thee will I establish my covenant. . ." After the great deluge and the departure of Noah's family from the ark, God again said, "And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you" (Genesis 9:9-17). God would never completely destroy the world again with such a flood, and the rainbow in the sky would be a visible token of this covenant. Thereafter the word is used throughout the Old Testament Scriptures referring to agreements between God and individuals, between God and the nation of Israel, and it is used in reference to agree-

THE SWORD AND STAFF

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Proverbially SPEAKING...

GOD IS greater than any problem you have or ever will have.

"Shared joy is double joy; shared sorrow is half a sorrow."

If a man lives with honesty, he knows what truth is.

Someone has said, "The flatterer pretends to see us as we see ourselves."

An ounce of practice is worth more than a pound of preaching.

"We can't stop the birds from flying over our head, but we can keep them from building a nest in our hair."

When we have stopped being compassionate, we have stopped being a human being and started being an animal.

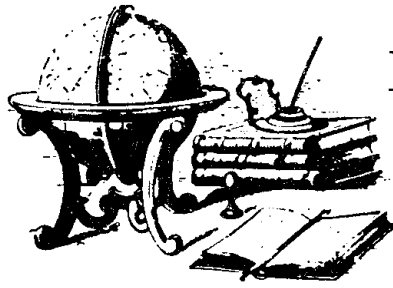
"People who know how much they're worth generally aren't worth too much."

Not only are the Scriptures inspired by the Holy Spirit, they are spiritually inspiring to the one who reads them.

"If modern scientific knowledge appears to contradict the Biblical word, then either our present-day science will prove to be in error or we do not understand the Bible properly."

The sin that God cannot forgive: the one you will not forsake (and no one can go to heaven with unforgiven sin).

"When it is the hardest to pray, we need to pray the hardest."



EDITORIAL COMMENTS...

FROM A "SWORD AND STAFF" NEWSLETTER—JAN., 1985:

I AM VERY PLEASED to inform you that we were able to get the typesetting equipment, and I wish to humbly and sincerely thank you for such interest, and immediate response when you learned of our need. There was enough money to pay for everything plus extra for supplies to get us going with it. This is a very humbling and heartening experience for me. I could never have done this on my own. To me this is a vote of confidence in what I am trying to do and a mandate from the LORD to "get with it" (use the remaining days of my life to the fullest for HIS GLORY). I pray that I can budget my time and money more carefully and get more accomplished this year and in the days ahead.

The equipment is really nice. I am in the process of learning how to use it. It is the computer/photo process of typesetting for the off-set printing process. It is very much like a typewriter keyboard plus various command keys. A screen is before you so you can see what is going on and make corrections if needed. Sixteen different kinds of type are on hold ready to be used by simply hitting the appropriate command keys. The size of the type is from 5½ points to 74 points (74 points is about an inch high). The type styles are beautiful, and (as I learn everything), it should greatly enhance the appearance of *The Sword and Staff*, making it more readable (as well as expediting getting it out). □

EDITORIAL *By-Ways*

GETTING INFORMED ABOUT ROCK MUSIC

MOST OLDER ADULTS know little about rock 'n' roll music except that it is loud and unpleasant to their ears. To them the volume of the instruments is so loud and intense the lyrics cannot be understood. It is dismissed as undesirable nonsense without even trying to
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EDITORIAL *By-Ways*

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consider the message of the music.

But is it just so much innocent noise listened to by so many young people?

I had always thought rock music was not exactly right, had discouraged young people from listening to it, but had not really looked into the matter with depth. So, when I read a book recently, *Why Knock Rock?*, I was provoked to do what they said.

They suggested that parents "Get smart." If you don't know what you are talking about young people will call your bluff. Check out the record department of the local variety store, then a rock record shop. You will be shocked (as a Christian) at what you see. Looking at the album covers will make you feel as if you are flipping through the pages of *Playboy*. You will see sex, violence, drugs, hedonism, along with Satanism, being peddled. Drug paraphernalia (at the rock record shops) may be for sale along with the records.

Obtain and browse through magazines that give the latest on rock music and rock groups; magazines that are prepared for, aimed at and read by young people. Such magazines are *Rolling Stone*, *Hit Parader*, *Circus*, *Musician*, and *Creem*. Here you will see what is going on with the rock groups and be able to read the lyrics of songs you could not understand.

I did this, and I became educated real fast! You get it straight from the "horse's mouth" here. No second hand stuff. I was very uncomfortable with a lot of the "gutter" talk about sex by the rock stars, but I was determined to become informed.

There were two words which kept surfacing in these magazines in talking about the rock 'n' roll world. They were *hedonistic* and *androgynous*.

Hedonistic

In the November, 1984, issue of *Hit Parader* (page 12) a mother wrote this publication: "I'm getting sick and tired of reading about the lewd and lascivious lifestyles that every heavy metal performer seems to lead. I'm the mother of a 14-year-old son, and I'm thinking about preventing him from reading about rock and roll until he learns that not every rock star is only concerned with drugs, alcohol and premarital sex. Would you please write something that would explain this to my son." The straight-forward answer to the letter (by the magazine) is very revealing: "Unfortunately, rock and roll is perhaps the most hedonistic of all entertainment forms. Bands like Motley Crue, Quiet Riot and Van Halen truly do lead lives that would make Julius Caesar green with envy. Thankful, from what I've been able to observe, the use of illegal drugs among rock performers has dropped sharply in recent years—but their love for booze and sex remains as strong as ever."

In case "hedonistic" is not one of your words, it comes from a Greek word which means pleasure. It is used in English to describe a lifestyle: the self-indul-

gent pursuit of pleasure, any kind, as a way of life. It is fleshly and animalistic and has no hang-ups in reference to morals. Anything goes. If it brings sensual gratification, do it.

Unrestrained illicit sex, liquor and drugs are marks of the trade in the rock world. Gene Simmons of KISS is quoted in *Entertainment Week* (Winston-Salem Journal, January 5, 1985) as saying, "Rock 'n' roll is all about promiscuity, you know." He continues, "Rock 'n' roll literally means sex. The term comes from a Leadbelly song saying, 'let me rock 'n' roll you all night long.' He wasn't talking about reading Nietzsche to her."

Nikki Sixx of Motley Crue in the October 31, 1984 issue of *Circus* (page 66) ties in their hedonistic lifestyle with their success, "The kids who come to see us want to identify with that. They see us living a reality that's just a fantasy for them." Then Dee Snider of Twisted Sisters says his music is like psychotherapy. Appealing to rebellious youth, he said, "If you can't afford to go to a doctor to find out why you're ——— up, then listen to metal. Dance around to that new music crap and you wanna go home and kill your parents! (page 111 of same issue of *Circus*).

Androgynous

Also in the November, 1984, issue of *Hit Parader* magazine (page 29) upcoming rock groups are singled out for consideration. One group is said already to be "an international press favorite due to their hard rock sound and androgynous image," and they were expected to make a go of it. The word "androgynous" keeps reoccurring as the common denominator of successful rock groups, and is considered as one of the necessary ingredients to bring this about. What does it mean?

Actually it is weird! The term "androgynous" is a compound word formed from two Greek words, *andros* plus *gune*. The meaning of *andros* is man, and *gune* means woman. So, the word "androgynous" means both male and female in one person. Hermaphroditic would describe it, or the practice of functioning either heterosexually or homosexually (being bisexual).

This explains a lot of things. It explains the image the rock groups are trying to project, as well as many times live. Look at the very appearance of the rock singers. In one sense they look crudely masculine, but at the same time they may have long effeminate hair, be wearing makeup, ear rings, and other jewelry normally associated with women. Some of their clothing would be more appropriate on the opposite sex (if appropriate is the word we should use).

The names they choose by which to identify their groups project the androgynous image. What about the AC/DC group? This is said to mean either heterosexual or homosexual (bisexual). There is a group called the "Iron Maiden" (and it is composed of men). Another one is called "Twisted Sisters" (men). This is seen in the KISS group, Alice Cooper, and Boy

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EDITORIAL *By-Ways*

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George.

Even if they don't pick such names, they try to project a mystic to keep you guessing about their sexual identity. Such an aurora surrounds Michael Jackson. The Prince in his "Purple Rain" says, "I'm not a woman, I'm not a man, I am something that you've never had. . ." (*Entertainment Week*, Winston-Salem Journal, November 3, 1984).

Recently while leafing through a magazine while waiting in a doctor's office, I saw this write-up about this rock group. It had a picture of them in concert. When they came out to perform, two of the macho-looking guys passionately kiss one another in the mouth. In another magazine, two fellows are seen pawing one another.

It is not a lovely picture, is it? In fact, it is sick. And to think that somewhere along the way music has done a flip-flop. When a lot of us were younger, pop music referred to the easy listening kind. Not any longer. Now pop mean rock. It is the music commonly listened to by the younger generation, and is it any wonder that there are so many mixed up people today? Looking to these rock stars, and identifying with them (even with their androgynous image), it is no wonder that so many are confused about their personal sexual identity.

I am convinced that the field of rock 'n' roll music has largely *become* the devil's playground. Diabolical influences seem to be behind these performers as they preach their hedonistic philosophies of life to our young people as entertainment. Rock music broke down the middle class' abhorrence to drugs, which heretofore had been kept in the ghettos of the larger cities. So much of the music is anti-Christian, anti-marriage, and anti-family. One recent song asked, "WHAT HAS LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?" Neither do we need any more Pink Floyds with their nihilistic fatalism.

The book that I mentioned earlier in this article gives four questions to ask about rock music (or any other kind of music) in determining whether it is right.

1. What are the lyrics saying?
2. What kind of lifestyles have the musicians chosen?
3. What do the graphics on the album covers indicate?
4. What are the goals of the songs and the performers? □

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THE POOR PREACHER'S WIFE

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT the preacher's wife who came home with a new dress?

The preacher said in exasperation, "Honey, you know we can't afford a new dress. What did it cost?"

She replied, "It was on sale for \$40. I just couldn't pass up a bargain like that! And I saved you \$20."

The preacher answered, "You didn't save \$20. You spent \$40! What on earth prompted you to buy it?"

"Well," she said, "The devil tempted me to buy it and I just couldn't resist."

"But why didn't you do what the Bible says and say, 'Get thee behind me, Satan'," the preacher wanted to know.

"I did," she insisted, "but he said, 'It's a perfect fit back here, too!'"—*Selected*

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NARROW-MINDED

NARROW-MINDED! Well, a person's mind should be narrow enough to shut out everything but truth, and broad enough to accept all truth.—*R.L. Whiteside*

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TO BE CALLED A DOG

TO HAVE someone call you a dog is not so bad after all, for the dog is a faithful friend, and he doesn't swear, he doesn't lie, doesn't drink, doesn't borrow, doesn't swindle, doesn't pretend, doesn't cheat, and wouldn't resent it if you called him a man. It gives him a good reputation.—*Selected*

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THE LORD SEES. . .

*The LORD looked around the room at them all,
The so-called Christians, big and small.*

*He saw the teachers being taught, who fell asleep;
The pupils whom they taught, "Thou shalt reap."*

*The sons of the elders were writing notes;
The daughter of the teacher was telling jokes.*

*The adults of the congregation who sit and talk,
Forgetting the children learn by their walk.*

*Do they honor their parents, or have they forgot?
Because of the things we do. . .we ought not.*

*He sees and is with us when we gather in His
Name;*

Do we come to praise Him or bring Him shame?

*Are our minds on another time and place?
Have we forgotten we are here. . .by His grace?*

*We listen to the words, but do we hear and do?
What do others see when they look at me and you?*

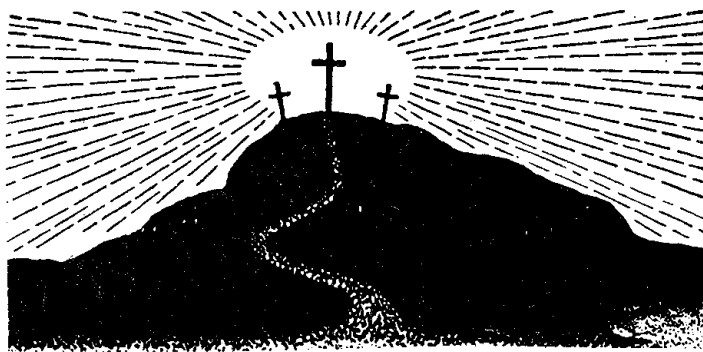
*Are they "turned off" by our actions, or "turned on"
by the light?*

*Remember, we walk by faith, but the world walks
by sight.*

—By MARY JEAN GREENFIELD

The SUPERIORITY OF THE NEW COVENANT

(Continued from Page 1)



Version and the New American Standard Bible the word COVENANT is used exclusively.

Covenants of Promise

Basically, when we think of the covenants, we think of the two major ones—the Old Testament and the New Testament—but that is not the whole picture. There were many covenants, according to Romans 9:6. Looking back, Paul said the Gentile world had been “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise” (Ephesians 2:12). There were many covenants of promise, not primarily in the sense of many different covenants of promise given, but the repetition of the same one and to different people.

The Twofold Covenant of Promise

The primary COVENANTS OF PROMISE (which are repeated time and time again) are all tied in with Genesis 12:1-5, although at the time the record does not call this a covenant. This had to do with Abraham leaving his homeland and going to the land that God would show him. Read this Scripture again: GENESIS 12:1-5. The covenant of promise may be broken down into two main parts: (1) Abraham’s seed becoming a great nation, and (2) the coming of the seed through whom all the families of the earth would be blessed (verse 3 here, but having its roots in GENESIS 3:15).

The covenant of promise was renewed with Abraham several times. When it was first given, Abraham was 75 years old and still wearing his original name of Abram (which meant exalted father). He would continue to be greeted as exalted father until he was 99 years of age, although he had no children (this must have gotten pretty thread-bare at times—what about the promises of God?). But when he was 99, God again renewed the original promise of Genesis 12 and changed his name to an even stronger one, Abraham (father of a great multitude) (Genesis 17:1-11). As a token of verification and anticipation, he was given the covenant of circumcision. This special severing of that part of the male body which has to do with reproduction constantly reminded him that he was destined to be the father of a son, then of a great nation, and

finally the “seed” through whom all families of the earth would be blessed.

Shortly thereafter Isaac was born and was growing into a promising young man when God put Abraham through a great trial of faith (Genesis 22). But Abraham came out of this ordeal with the promises of God more firmly intact. Listen: “By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou has done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed: because thou hast obeyed my voice” (Genesis 22:16-18). For God to accomodate Himself to the thinking of man, and to put Himself under oath, is to mean that what He had said was irrevocable. His covenants of promise would surely come to pass.

The verses of Scripture found in Genesis 26:2-4 and 28:10-15 are most interesting to read. To Abraham’s son Isaac and his son Jacob God made and renews the same twofold covenant of promise He had made to Abraham, i.e. (1) a great nation to come, and (2) the “seed” through whom all nations of the earth would be blessed. These covenants of promise are so important and emphatic as given by God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that hereafter God will intentionally be called “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”

The First Part of the Twofold Covenant of Promise Honored

God was finally beginning to honor His covenant originally made to Abraham with the birth of Isaac and the beginning of a small nomadic tribe that spread out a little more with Jacob—but that was a long way from being a great nation of people with a homeland. Like God told Abraham in Genesis 15, his posterity would be about 400 years in Egypt until the sins of the Amorites were full, then the promised land of Canaan would be given to them. Their national life would begin at that time.

Toward the end of the 400 year period a most extraordinary thing happened to a well-known descendant of Abraham in the desolate wilderness of the Sinai peninsula adjoining Egypt. Moses, a prominent religious and political refugee from Egypt, saw and experienced a most unusual thing while looking after the flocks of his father-in-law. A bush was aflame, but it did not burn up. Then to add to the mystery a voice called out from the bush in the imperative mood. After telling Moses to take the shoes from off his feet, the voice said, “I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Exodus 3). Moses had a divine mission to carry out. He was to lead the children of Israel (descendants of Abraham) out of Egyptian bondage to the promised land. God further identified Himself, “And God said unto Moses,

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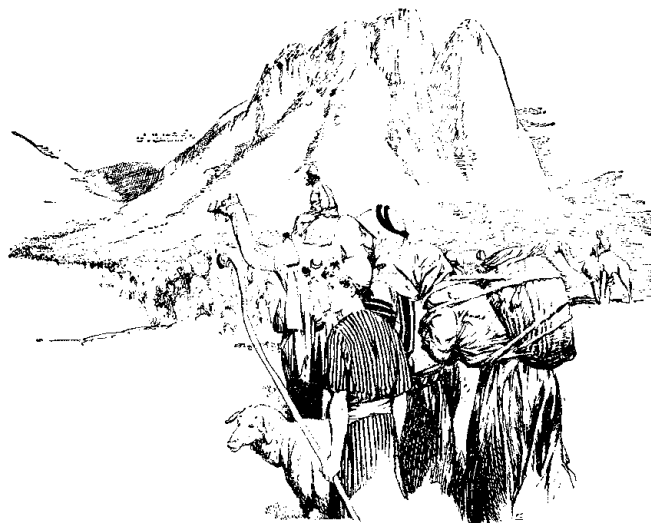
THE SUPERIORITY OF THE NEW COVENANT *(Continued from Last Page)*

I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial to all generations." After Moses' first visit to Pharaoh God further speaks to Moses in reference to His covenant name of JEHOVAH (also rendered LORD and coming from the verbal roots of "I AM THAT I AM"). Then He mentions the covenants of promise He had established with the Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), and He said, "I have remembered my covenant" (Exodus 6:2-5).

As the first part of the covenant of promise is fulfilled, while they go to form a nation, God gives them a body of laws at Mt. Sinai, which included civil and religious laws (see Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). As Paul will bring out in the New Testament, the fulfillment of the first part of the covenant of promise (which was accompanied with the giving of the LAW) did not set aside the second part of the covenant of promise. In fact, that was the main purpose of it all: "TILL THE SEED SHOULD COME TO WHOM THE PROMISE WAS MADE" (Galatians 3:19).

Covenants of Promise Continued to Be Made Under the Law

Although the Old Testament (THE LAW) seems to dominate the scene with the fulfillment of the first part of the twofold covenant of promise, God continued to make covenants of promise during the LAW period. There are many such references we could point out, but let us single out a few. To David God said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant. Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations" (found in Psalms 89:3,4 and other places in the Old Testament). Isaiah 7:14 becomes more specific: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name IMMANUEL." Then listen to Isaiah 9:6,7, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." In the midst of this anticipation of something marvelous in connection with the seed of David which was to come, God lets it be known that the LAW of Moses is going to be replaced by a new covenant. "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers" (at Mt. Sinai when He brought them out of Egypt) (Jeremiah



31:31,32). So, in connection with the fulfillment of the coming seed through whom all families of the earth would be blessed, there would be a new, a better, a superior covenant for mankind.

That brings us back to the theme of this article, "THE SUPERIORITY OF THE NEW COVENANT." The new covenant, known as the New Testament, is better any way you choose to look at it. Let us consider that.

I. THE NEW TESTAMENT IS A BETTER COVENANT BECAUSE IT IS THE FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S COVENANTS OF PROMISE.

All that came before the New Testament was preliminary and preparatory. Man was lost in sin. How he needed a Saviour, but he was not ready for the Saviour. God wanted to prove many things to mankind first. That way man would better see his need of a Saviour and appreciate him more when he came. First, man lived from Adam to Moses *without a defined system of divine law*, but man did not attain the righteousness of God with such a loose arrangement. (Recall the great classic examples of wickedness occurred during this time—THE FLOOD, SODOM AND GOMORRAH). Now (in connection with the first part of the promise of Genesis 12) God set up the nation of Israel to further demonstrate certain things to fallen humanity (and finally to bring the Saviour of the world into the world through this nation). The LAW given to the Jews gave a living demonstration of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and man's inability to save himself by perfect obedience to law. Man's failure under this law is made emphatic by Paul saying, "For all (whether by law or without law) have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). And to break one law was to be guilty of breaking the whole legal system as far as guilt was concerned (Galatians 3:10; James 2:10).

Paul, in discussing that the LAW was only temporary, asked a question and answered it. "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator" (Galatians 3:19). It would seem from this Scripture that the LAW was brought in to re-

strain sinful man until the promised Saviour of man would come. It certainly was a restraining influence upon man, but in being so it proved a second point, the exceeding sinfulness of sin and man. Restrain a wild animal with a collar or a harness and see what will happen. In the wild, although, wild, he may have seemed calm and somewhat at ease. Put the restraint of the collar or harness on him, and he will jump and leap and kick and bite and claw—you name it! You will really see how wild the animal is. The Old Testament LAW served that purpose with unchanged and unregenerate men. They needed to be tamed, a change within, before they could adapt to the restraint of law. The LAW proved the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Man needed a Saviour to change him. He needed grace.

Physical Fulfillment Prefigured Spiritual Fulfillment

The physical fulfillment of the first part of the covenants of promise prefigured the spiritual fulfillment of the second part. The first part involved physical Israel and the second involved the spiritual in all families of the earth being blessed (as we shall see the nature of this). Perhaps this should be considered later, but let us highlight it now.

—Promises were made to father Abraham and his seed. His physical seed (or descendants) are not counted as the seed of Abraham, but Christians by

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ARE YOU INTERESTED IN HEAVEN?

“WHAT A QUESTION to ask me, preacher! Of course I’m interested in heaven. I was baptized by old brother Faithful over at Piney-Slab Holler away back in. . .well, I just don’t remember when it was.”

“What’s that? Where am I going to church? Why I go over to Antioch where brother Smooth Hit preaches. You say he has been gone for three years or more? I didn’t know it had been that long since I had gone to church. But you know how it is, business, weather or what have you.”

“Where does the family go to church? No where. You know how my wife is. Oh you ain’t met my wife? Well, she won’t wear just anything to church and will not get the kids ready and I know it’s not the man’s place to take the kids to church. I’m telling you I don’t see how I have kept so interested in heaven living with that woman. I’ve taken more off her than Dan ever took of Beer-sheba.”

“How much money have I given to the church? Now jut a minute, preacher. You can ask all the questions you want to, but when you ask about money, you’ve gone a mite too far. It’s none of your business! That is one thing I never do, go around bragging about how much I give, and when people ask like you did I am not going to tell them. Just makes me glad I didn’t give anything.”

“The very idea, asking me if I was interested in heaven and then ask me how much I’ve been giving to the Lord.”—*Selected*

faith are regarded as the spiritual seed of Abraham—“And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:29; cf. Galatians 3:6-9; Romans 9:7,8; Romans 4:16).

—The apostle Paul speaks of Israel after the flesh and Israel after the Spirit (I Corinthians 10:18; Galatians 6:15,16; Romans 9:6). The church of Christ constitutes the Israel of God today. Israel after the flesh will reap the benefits of the second part of the covenant of promise just like the rest of us by becoming part of Israel after the Spirit. (May we never forget this)

—There were physical Jews, but under the new covenant the apostle Paul wrote, “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not of the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God” (Romans 2:28,29). Again Paul wrote, “For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Philippians 3:3).

—Today our promised land is not a physical land flowing with milk and honey, but a heavenly and eternal one (Hebrews 11:8-10,13-16; chapters 3 & 4; John 14; etc.). Rest assured that it will be ours as heirs of the promises.

Yes, instead of stress on physical blessings, the primary emphasis is on eternal and spiritual ones. Certainly the first part of the covenants of promise prefigured a better fulfillment which came to pass in the second part. How great this is! What a better covenant we have!

The Seed Through Whom All Families of the Earth Are Blessed

The covenants of promise had been renewed time and time again with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The first part of the covenant of promise involving the physical was used as a vehicle to bring about the accomplishment of the second—“and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” This promise of the seed which would come through Abraham’s lineage really embodied the original promise and hope of mankind. Genesis 3:15 spoke of the seed of woman that would bruise (crush) the head of the serpent, i.e. that would destroy the power of the devil. The covenants of promise were renewed and intensified even under the

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HOW DID THE WORLD START?

HUNDREDS OF TOP SCIENTISTS worked together to build the ultimate computer—a master brain with the intellect to answer all questions and solve all the mysteries of the world.

Finally it was completed and ready for its first question. With trembling hands, one of the scientists fed in the query: “How did the world start?”

Lights flashed, wheels whirred, tumblers clicked. Then the machine answered, “See Genesis!”—*Copied*

THE SUPERIORITY OF THE NEW COVENANT *(Continued from Last Page)*

Old Testament setup. We have noticed a few of them. Finally the angel of the LORD made the announcement regarding Mary, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21-23). Like Paul wrote, "...when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of woman, made under the law" (Galatians 4:4). Jesus came miraculously of the seed of woman (no man involved) in the virgin birth. He came as IMMANUEL (God with us) to live among man as man; to suffer, to experience temptation as we—yet he knew no sin. Finally after living a sinless life, he crushed the head of the serpent in conquering death by His glorious resurrection from the dead. No grave could hold him! The Great Commission makes it plain that the good news is for all (Matthew 28; Mark 16). Paul exclaims, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:55-57). Now all men may be blessed in accordance with Genesis 12:3 and 3:15. Speaking of such Scriptures (Genesis 12:3; 22:18), Peter makes a quotation and explains what is meant: "And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:25,26). How wonderful to know that the guilt of sin is for ever removed! How wonderful to know that Jesus has become the firstfruits of those who slept (I Corinthians 15:20). The universal problem of death and sin has been taken care of.

Therefore, beloved, the New Testament is a better covenant. The superiority of it is obvious. It is the best. It is the consummation of the ages; it is the end result, in what it accomplishes, to which all other promises were pointing. It is better, for the fulfillment of a promise is better than just being promised something. The human race may once again be in harmony with its Creator and live in hope of eternal things (not just passing temporal ones).

II. THE NEW TESTAMENT IS A BETTER COVENANT BECAUSE IT IS NEW IN CONTRAST WITH THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Significance of New and Old

There are two words for "new" in the Greek New Testament, *kainos* (which means new in reference to quality) and *neos* (which means new in reference to time). All the references to the new covenant (testament) make use of *kainos* except one (Hebrews 12:24). In other words, emphasis is put on NEW covenant having to do with the quality of it. This is what is meant when the writer of Hebrews quotes Jeremiah 31:31 (Hebrews 8:8). It stresses the quality of the new covenant in contrast with the old. The Hebrew writer

comments, pertaining to the Jeremiah quotation, in Hebrews 8:13, "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." So, the LAW of Moses is pictured as old, ancient, worn out in contrast with *kainos*, the new of quality. It is pictured as being in that state even back in Jeremiah's day. Whereas we see the covenant as being so new and vital that it is an everlasting covenant, always new (Hebrews 13:20,21). In fact, the words of Christ will not pass away (Matthew 24:35) and will be around to judge us on that Great Day (John 12:48).

The Theme of the Book of Hebrews

The superiority of Christ and the New Testament is the theme of the book of Hebrews showing that it is better. Here is a rough outline of Hebrews.

Introduction (1:1-4).

I. The Superiority of the Son to Angels (1:5-2:18).

II. The Superiority of the Son to Moses and Joshua (3 and 4).

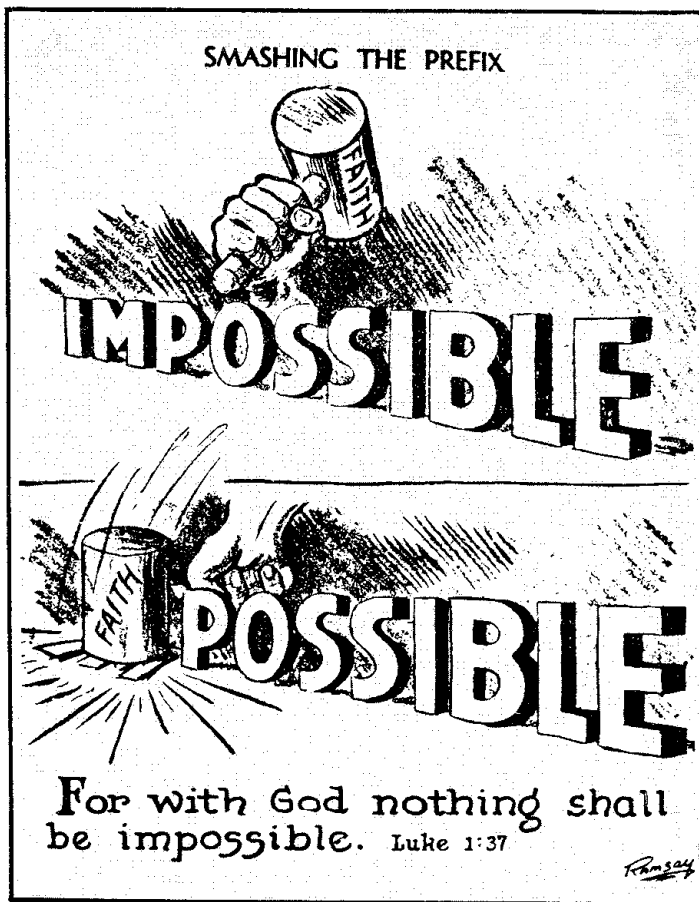
III. The Superior Nature of Christ's High-Priesthood (5 - 7).

IV. The Superior Ministry of Christ as High Priest (8:1-10:18).

V. Exhortations to Faithfulness to the New Covenant (10:19-12:29).

Conclusion (chapter 13).

Christ and the New Testament are superior in every
(Continued on Page 10)



What About Anointing with Oil and Praying for the Sick?

—By J.W. ROBERTS

“IS ANY AMONG you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord” (JAMES 5:14).

Let the elders **pray over him**. Is this an example of ordinary prayer for recovery through natural means as David prayed for the recovery of his baby (2 Samuel 12), a prayer in which Christians prayed for something to happen in the providence of God (such as the prayer for Peter's deliverance from prison, Acts 12:12, or is this prayer in connection with miraculous healing (such as Jesus prayed before the raising of Lazarus, John 11:41, or as Peter prayed at Dorcas' bed, Acts 9:40)? This depends upon a number of other factors in the interpretation of the passage before us. Certainty about the answer is probably not possible now.

Whether it is the concern of this passage or not, prayers for natural recovery in God's providence or for help and aid in other ways are scriptural. Paul prayed for recovery from his affliction (2 Corinthians 12:7-11); and, though he did not receive the answer in his way, he was strengthened to bear his trouble. The church made prayer for Peter (Acts 12:12). Hezekiah prayed to recover and God heard his prayer (2 Kings 20). Paul implies that he had prayed for Epaphroditus in his illness and that God had had mercy on both Paul and him so that he recovered (Philippians 2:25-27). Such prayers ought to be prayed with the attitude of “God's will be done.” It goes without saying (in spite of the contention of some “Divine Healers”) that such prayers ought to be accompanied with the help of medical knowledge and treatment.

The anointing was to be done **in the name of the Lord**. This means that at the time of the anointing the name of Jesus was pronounced, asserting that the anointing was done in that name. Thus Peter said to the lame man (Acts 3:6), “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” This is certainly the meaning if the anointing is miraculous. If otherwise, the use of medicine in Jesus' name would probably signify that it is to be used with prayer in the name of Jesus that it might be effective.

There were two common uses of **anointing with oil** which are pertinent to this passage. One was medicinal. The bodies of the sick were rubbed with olive oil (sometimes with that mixed with other ingredients). Instances of this are to be seen in the good Samaritan's action (Luke 10:34) and Isaiah 1:6 and Jeremiah 8:22; 46:11 (cf. Josephus, *Wars* I, xxxiii, 657; *Antiquities* XVII, vi, 172; Piny, *Natural History*,

31:47). Thus whatever is the decision about the kind of healing involved here, the use of medicine in healing is approved in the Bible. Paul approved a medicinal use of a type of wine for Timothy's stomach and his frequent ailments (I Timothy 5:23).

Another use of oil in anointing was ceremonial. I was often used in the ritual of appointment (1 Samuel 16:13) and seemingly in cases of miraculous healing. When Jesus sent the disciples out to heal by his authority, oil was to be used: “And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them” (Mark 6:13). This was similar to the laying on of hands in cases of healing (Mark 1:41) or to covering the blind man's eyes with clay (John 9:6). All these were evidently symbolic, calling attention to the miracle and to the one doing it. Some of them were approved as having effect in healing (e.g., the covering with clay). But as ordinary means of healing such things were not able to account for the results which were produced by the miracle which accompanied their use. Thus the activity called attention to the power of the miracle and of the one healing.

As in the case of the prayer mentioned above, it is impossible to say with certainty which of the uses of anointing James had in mind. Certainly in the context of their own activity at the time, the first readers of James knew which he meant. But that context is not known to us today. We can only say which is more probable and what the application for us would be in either case.

It seems to this writer that the healing was miraculous. We know that spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1ff., esp. vs. 9) were bestowed upon the early church as a means of confirming the gospel in the infant state of the church (Mark 16:20; Acts 8:7,13). This was somewhat equal to the power of Jesus manifested to heal while on earth (John 14:12), which became one of the signs that he was sent from the Father, and yet which was often used in compassion upon the afflicted.

If the healing which James has in mind is miraculous, the oil was ceremonial; prayer was a part of the preparation both of the miracle worker and the onlookers (Matthew 17:21; John 11:41f). The reason for the elders being called is not so apparent. But it is probably because (since the gifts were distributed by the laying on of the apostles' hands, Acts 8:17f; 19:6) when these gifts were imparted, the elders would be the most likely to be selected to receive them. If this is the correct interpretation of the instruction of James, then the passage has no direct bearing on the practice of the church today. It is obvious both from practice and from the teaching of the scripture that such miraculous gifts did not outlast the apostolic age of the church. Notice the following: (1) The reason for the gifts, the confirmation of the word (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3,4; Acts 14:3), no longer obtains, since the word is fully given and confirmed. (2) The scriptures themselves

(Continued on Next Page)

THE SUPERIORITY OF THE NEW COVENANT

(Continued from Page 8)

respect to the Old Testament. The Old Testament was given by God through angels (who are merely ministering spirits)—the New Testament came through the very Son of God Himself. Moses and Joshua, through whom and to whom God gave the LAW and led the children of Israel, failed to give the people rest. There is rest still available in Heaven for the people of God made possible by the Son of God. A High Priest who is sinless and lives for ever surpasses anything the Old Testament ever thought about. And how great is the ministry of Jesus as High Priest. Everything points to a better covenant in contrast with the old (Hebrews 7:22; 8:6).

Some Specifics

The new covenant got right at the heart of the sin problem. The Hebrew writer, referring to Jeremiah 31:31, said, "For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers. . . because they continued not in my covenant. . ." (Hebrews 8:8-13). There was much fault found with imperfect people. They did not live up to the law. It was very much like handing a Bible to a sinner on the street and telling him to live by it without first experiencing an internal change. The law approached man's stony heart externally with laws engraved on tables of stone. The law was good, but man was not. However, the approach of the new covenant is the other way around. It gets man straightened out on the inside and works out to produce the righteousness God wants, having first accepted the righteousness of Christ in forgiveness.

The law made nothing, no one, perfect by the animal sacrifices. The blood of bulls and goats could never take away sin (Hebrews 10:1-18). "But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year" (10:3). Every time that a sacrifice was made it was more of a memorial to man's guilt than his forgiveness. "But this man (JESUS), after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God. . . For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (10:12,14). There are no more sacrifices to be made; no more remembrance of sins—"their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (10:17). Think of that! God, who is omniscient (who knows everything), chooses not to know. When He looks upon us, He no longer sees our sins. They have been taken away by the perfect sacrifice of the sinless Son of God.

And here is a concept that is hard to fathom. In the book of Hebrews we find Christ is high priest and sacrifice at the same time (Hebrews 7:21-27; chapter 10). "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (7:25).

What a great covenant! It is not national and temporal, as the Old Testament, but an everlasting covenant for all people (Hebrews 13:20,21).

The New Covenant and the Old in Contrast

There are certain Scriptures that vividly put the old covenant and the new in sharp contrast, bringing out the superior nature of the new. Consider the following as a matter of interest and emphasis.

—"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect" (Hebrews 10:1). Paul in Colossians 2:17 spoke of the ordinances of the LAW, "Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body if of Christ." So, we have the shadow in contrast with the body, the image, the reality.

—"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). Also, we have it spoken of a "the law" and "the faith" (Galatians 3:23), as well as "the law" and "the gospel."

—"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2). This certainly is a very descriptive contrast

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WHAT ABOUT ANOINTING WITH OIL AND PRAYING FOR THE SICK?

(Continued from Last Page)

teach that the gifts were to cease (I Corinthians 13:8). (3) The means of the gifts being conferred (the laying on of the apostles' hands) argues for their discontinuance. (4) Church history confirms this conclusion, for efforts to revive such gifts in the post-apostolic church (e.g., the Montanists) were considered heresies. (5) Modern practice confirms it, because the "healings" performed in the cult services today are never the kind that remove doubt, such as restored limbs, sight recovered of those born blind, or the raising of the dead.

However, if the healing was medicinal and providential help, and the reason for calling the elders was that such men were leaders and men of holy reputation (I Timothy 3:7) and their prayers would be valuable as righteous men (vs. 16).

Since it is clearly demonstrated from the New Testament that such miraculous aid existed in the church of that age and since this healing would be more certain to offer aid to the sick, it would seem that it might be expected that the instruction of James concerns the miraculous healings. It is the "prayer of faith" (not the anointing) in verse 15 which promises the healing. The expression **in the name of the Lord** would seem to be more understandable by this interpretation. This passage cannot be appealed to by the sects which teach modern divine healing, unless they can prove that these miraculous gifts were to continue beyond the apostolic age.

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standing in bold relief.

—“The ministration of death” in contrast with “the ministration of the spirit;” also, “For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory” (II Corinthians 3:6-9).

—It is “the yoke of bondage” in contrast with liberty and “the perfect law of liberty” (Galatians 5:1; 4:6,7,9; Romans 8:15; II Corinthians 3:17; James 1:25). Also, we have the law and the gospel represented from the viewpoint of being sons of the “bondmaid” and the “freewoman” (Galatians 4:21-31).

IN CONCLUSION, in briefly summarizing our subject, we can correctly and emphatically say the essence of the NEW COVENANT is JESUS CHRIST, the SON of the LIVING GOD (and he cannot be surpassed)! Let us put all of our trust in HIM and glorify HIS NAME. □

ONE THING I KNOW
John 9:25

*I may not know what lies ahead
Around tomorrow's bend;
One thing I know within my heart,
Christ is my constant friend.*

*I may not know when sorrows come
How much the heart can bear;
But this I know, whate'er the pain,
God hears and answer prayer.*

*I may not know what labor lies
Along life's busy way;
One thing I know, His strength will be
Sufficient for each day.*

*If may not know when friendships fail
How one can right the wrong;
But this I know, He'll show the way
And lead one into song!*

*I may not know when death will come
And I walk the valley dim;
One thing I know, He'll lead me on
Through Heaven's gate with Him.*

—By Agnes Wells

WORSE THAN AN ATHEIST

IF A MAN should get up in a congregation and declare that he does not believe in the existence of God, it would produce a profound impression.

It happened at a church service in Parker County, Texas, that a man said to the person next to him that he did not believe in God. The man immediately reported to the minister what had been said to him.

Everything was still for a moment. The minister asked solemnly, “Did you say that?”

The atheist said, “I did.”

“Do you not believe there is a God?”

“I do not.”

The atheist was serious and stood his ground. It created a profound impression, a shock throughout the community.

The next morning the atheist went to the post office, which was in a little store. The storekeeper was not at the meeting the night before and this conversation took place:

“Say, what is this I hear? I heard that you said publicly in the meeting last night that you do not believe in a God.”

“I said that.”

“Why, man, you are a fool. Nature and everything proves that there is a God.”

“Do you believe in God?” said the atheist.

“Certainly I do,” said the storekeeper. “I have always believed there is a God.”

“Do you serve Him?” asked the atheist.

“No, I am not a Christian; but I am not an infidel; I believe in God.”

The atheist answered, “Man, YOU are a fool. If I believed there is a God, I would not lose an hour without serving Him. How can you believe in a God and not serve Him? That is the most foolish thing any man can possibly do.”

They were both correct in their estimates of each other. “The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God.” But his foolishness is exceeded by the man who believes there is a God and will not serve Him.

Ambassador of Peace

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ONLY ONE QUARTER TO SPEND

WITH A SHINING QUARTER, a tiny little boy went into a candy store. With the utmost seriousness, studying each assortment with deep thoughtfulness, he wandered from case to case. Tired of waiting, his mother called, “Hurry, son, spend your quarter. We must be going.” The child replied, “But Mamma, I've got to spend it carefully; I only have one.”

You, too, have only one life. How are you spending it?

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THE WAY HOME

A LITTLE GIRL was lost in a big city. A passer-by asked her where she lived. She told him the street and house number. So he proceeded to tell her to go four blocks ahead, then turn right two blocks, left half a block, cross the street, etc., etc.

By the time he got through she had forgotten the beginning and cried as hard as ever. Just then a gentleman came along and learned of her plight and said, “Give me your hand, my dear; I live close by your home and will take you there.”

The first man was a way-shower; the other man was the way. All her anxiety was gone. She did not have to remember the maze of directions. She simply put her hand in that of her guide and was brought home. So Jesus is the WAY...He will guide you through life and bring you safely HOME.—Selected

“GOD MEANT IT FOR GOOD”

A STUDY OF the life of Joseph teaches us that things are not always what they seem. It was not always immediately noticeable in every incident of Joseph's life, but God was with him. God was working His purpose out, even when from all outward signs Joseph was experiencing adverse circumstances. When we review the life of Joseph, we can learn a lesson about the Providence of God. . . God at work in Joseph's life.

Joseph was the son of his father's old age, and of his favorite wife. He was therefore shown partiality over his brothers. His “coat of many colors” (Genesis 37:3) was one evidence of his most favored son standing. His father's partiality caused Joseph to be resented by his brothers. His popularity with them was not enhanced by his dreams which indicated that he was destined to become their superior (Genesis 37:5-11). On an occasion when the brothers were feeding their flocks some distance from home, Joseph was sent to see about them. His envious brothers thought the occasion had come to get rid of this pest of a brother, and sold him to some Ishmaelite traders who passed by. They in turn sold him as a slave in Egypt to an officer of Pharaoh's guard named Potiphar.

Because Joseph continued to be faithful to Jehovah, the Lord was with him. His master recognized his ability and soon elevated him to be the manager of all his business. It was not difficult to see God's Providence at work in his promotions.

But Potiphar's wife cast her eyes upon this fine young man, and tried day after day to seduce him (Genesis 39:10). He steadfastly refused her advances, citing two reasons why it would be improper for him to yield to her desires: (a) the trust his master had placed in him, and (b) he recognized that adultery was a “sin against God” (Genesis 39:9). The scorned woman then lied about him to her husband, and Joseph was unjustly thrown into prison.

It might seem that unjustly being thrown into prison would not be consistent with God's being with Joseph, but it soon became apparent that He was, for Joseph was soon elevated to the status of “chief trustee,” in charge of all the other prisoners. He did so well in that position that the keeper of the prison had nothing to worry about. While in prison Joseph interpreted the dreams of the chief baker and butler. When the butler was released as Joseph predicted, he urged him to remember to speak to Pharaoh about him so that his release might be secured. Sadly, the butler “forgot,” and Joseph remained in prison for some time.

Some time later Pharaoh had a dream that none of his wise men could explain, and the butler remembered Joseph, who was brought from prison to interpret it. Predicting that there would be seven years of good harvest followed by seven years of famine, Joseph advised Pharaoh to select a good man to place in charge of the food supplies of Egypt. He chose Joseph, who was at this time 30 years of age (Genesis 41:46).

About nine years later, Joseph's position was the means of saving his entire family from destruction. When he finally revealed himself to his brothers, he

told them that his being in Egypt was the work of God who had sent him before the rest of the family in order to save them (Genesis 45:3-8). But they were still apprehensive of his attitude toward them after their father died. Once again he had to assure them that he viewed his experiences as the work of God. “Fear not. . . ye thought evil against me: but *God meant it unto good. . .*” (Genesis 50:20).

Where was God when his brothers sold him into slavery? when Potiphar's wife lied about him? when he remained forgotten in prison? He was “with Joseph” then just as certainly as he was when Joseph received good things. . . God for both evil and good to work together for good (cf. *Romans 8:28*).—**James E. Cooper**

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Questions from Ohio:

Question: “Is it wrong for a woman to have the morning prayer in regular worship services?”

Answer: Perhaps the answer to your question is found in I Timothy. In this epistle Paul deals with the public life of the church. In chapter 2:8 he says, “I will therefore that *men* pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” This word for men (or man) is *andros* in the Greek, and Thayer says this word is used “with reference to sex, and so to distinguish a man from a woman.” So, this word is the same as saying male. In I Timothy 2:8 it is used in contrast with the next verse, “In like manner also, that *women* adorn themselves in modest apparel” etc. (in connection with the public assembly of the church; of course, other places too).

In the light of this Scripture, and what Paul says in verse 12 of the same chapter, I would say that it is inappropriate for a woman to *lead* in the prayer of the regular church assembly. However, in a situation where it is a prayer meeting, and it is open to everyone to pray, I think it is a different matter. No principle is violated.

Also, a question was asked about starting a church. I have no special information to give other than that should circumstances find a Christian in a place where there is no New Testament church, and circumstances compel him to be living there, he is the church. One has already been started. In the early days of the church, they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word (Acts 8:4). Consequently new churches of Christ sprung up in new areas. If one is so far away from an established church that he feels he cannot drive to services in another place, he should start having the Lord's supper, Bible study, and prayer on a regular basis in his own home (if nothing else). If he feels inadequate, he could enlist the help of others from established churches which take a faithful stand. Perhaps a public place could be acquired in which to meet. Things could develop even more from this base.

But, most of all, I would suggest that a Christian really know where he stands with the Lord. Let him know he is the representative of Christ's church

whether the numbers are small or large. Many times small Christians cannot cope with small numbers. They are too insecure.—**J. GIBBONS**

AN ODOR THAT EVEN A SKUNK CAN'T STAND (Think on This One)

THIS HAPPENED in Minneapolis. The lady had left her screen door open so her cat could come in—and lo—in came a skunk. She wanted to get the skunk back out without getting excited. Knowing that newspapers don't always get the details correct, I wrote the lady, asking for the facts. Here is her reply:

Dear Mr. Buckles:

Yes, the newspaper article is true, but happened a little different than the paper quoted it. I left the screen door open, so that my cat would come in. The screen door opened into the porch. A little later the skunk came in and went behind the door leading to the second floor. The question was how to get the skunk out without getting him excited. So I called the police, and four of them came. After talking a while, one decided to try smoking him out, so he blew cigarette smoke through the crack of the door. Then the skunk walked out onto the porch and down the steps, with no harm done.

Isn't that "something"! When a person blows tobacco smoke out, it is so obnoxious that even a skunk can't take it.—**HAROLD BUCKLES**

Why Do We Partake of the Lord's Supper Every Sunday?

WE PARTAKE of the Lord's supper every Sunday because the church in the first century of the Christian era, under the direct guidance of Christ's inspired apostles, observed it that often. And it was on that day, the first day of the week, that they observed it. These facts are more important than most people realize. What the original church did correctly, as taught and directed by those men chosen and empowered by our Lord, constitutes the STANDARD for the church in all succeeding ages. The early church lovingly remembered the Lord in holy communion every first day of the week, and so should we.

The record of Jesus' words does not establish the frequency of the Lord's supper, but apostolic guidance established a weekly observance. The church of God at Corinth, for example, met on the first day of the week (I Corinthians 16:2), and a careful reading of I Corinthians 11:17-34 makes it clear that the Lord's supper was to be a part of their regular assemblies.

The disciples at Troas met on the first day of the week for the expressed purpose of breaking bread, i.e., partaking of the Lord's supper (Acts 20:7).

Certainly there is, in the New Testament, neither

command nor precedent for a monthly, quarterly, or annual, observance of the Lord's supper—but there is apostolic precedent for observance on the first day of the week.

Philip Sachaff, in Volume II of his great work on church history, pp. 236-237, wrote: "The communion was a regular and the most solemn part of the Sunday worship. . . The services proper consisted of two principle acts: the *oblation*, or presenting of the offering of the congregation. . . and the *communion*, or partaking of the consecrated elements." Dr. Schaff was writing of the period between A.D. 100 and 311.

For seven hundred years the ordinance was observed weekly. John Calvin said, "The change was a contrivance of the devil." John Wesley advised his people to spread the Table each week.

Why do we partake of the Lord's supper every week? Because it is Scriptural and therefore right. . . because Christ grows more precious and special with each remembrance. Some have presumed that a weekly remembrance of Christ's sacrifice makes it commonplace. I can only think that those who sincerely say this must never have experienced the joy and security of the weekly remembrance, or else they have never loved our Lord as Christians love Him.

—By **RICHARD SNELL**

*Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings
Thou hast perfected praise.
(Matthew 21:16)*



THE ROAD TO GET THERE

I DON'T KNOW all about heaven, but I know the way to get there. "To whom shall we go," exclaimed Peter, "Thou hast the words of eternal life?" A recent writer relates how "a traveler in Switzerland, uncertain of his way, asked a small boy by the way-side where Kandersteg was, and received, so the traveler remarked, the most significant answer that was ever given to him: 'I do not know, sir,' said the boy, 'where Kandersteg is, but there is the road to it.' "

—Selected

SOMETHING IS WRONG

SOMETHING IS WRONG when members of the church refuse to attend Sunday morning Bible classes.

If a person is too sick to go, something is wrong with his health.

If he thinks he does not need the spiritual help and growth that comes from Bible study, something is wrong with his judgment.

If he sleeps too late, he is too lazy.

If he does not have enough interest to go, something is dangerously wrong with his attitude. Indifference causes men to be lost.

If he is too busy to go, something is wrong with his schedule. The person who is too busy to serve the Lord is too busy to go to Heaven.

If he lets company keep him away, something is wrong with his priorities, his sense of values, his courage and his loyalty to the Lord.

Is something wrong in your life as far as this matter is concerned? Be honest with yourself. Face up to it, and make it right.—*Adapted*

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“NEGATIVES” WHICH CRY for ATTENTION

MANY BRETHREN HAVE been taught that the only thing the congregation as a whole should hear about must be of a “positive” nature. If, for example, we have backsliders, or members who are not joining with us regularly on the first day of the week to break bread, keep it quiet. Don’t bring their names up; let the elders handle it. I guess the idea is to not let the congregation know we may be having trouble. Let them always feel that all is well. Don’t upset Mrs. Jones by suggesting that the congregation pray for her backslidden son, or Mr. Smith’s son, who has not been in the assembly for six months.

After reading Hebrews 3:12-14 and 10:25, I can’t help but feel that this attitude is not only wrong but damaging to Christ’s church. If these things are kept secret from God’s people, how can we fulfill our obligation to pray for these backsliders and seek their restoration? How can we know to visit those who have fallen away, and work to bring them back to the fold? Some would say it is our duty to look around and find out these things for ourselves. That is correct; but how do we go about this?—as though we were a detective, afraid someone might discover what we are up to? I would say not. We are all one family in God, and should act that way. Would we, in hunting for one of our own missing children, hide it from the rest of the family, or would we call for their help?

It is my prayer, brethren, that we can, by our prayers, calling and sincere feelings, turn these so-called “negatives” into “positives” for the Lord and the congregation. The keeping of old members is as important as the gaining of new one. Read Ephesians 4:16. We must have the whole body in order to function, build, and grow.

The hiding, or keeping quiet, of these matters would

be like a handless arm continuing to move the plate to the mouth, yet the body continues to grow weaker. Remember: One less in congregational attendance cancels out one gain.

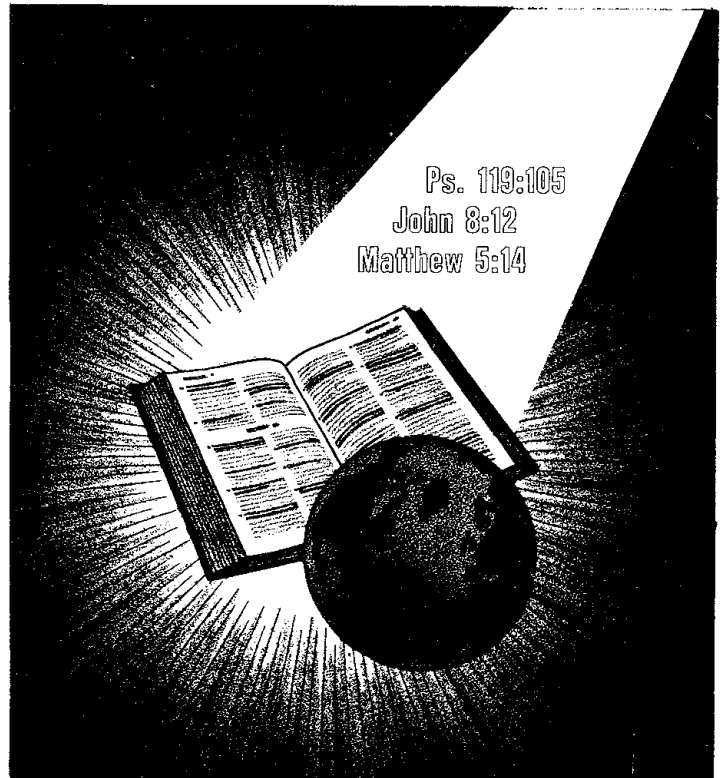
An account of all these things will be called for by Christ (Hebrews 13:17). Read and study Galatians 6:2: “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” This is the way the fundamental law of the Christian life is fulfilled.—*Dennis Fray*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

“DARE TO DREAM”

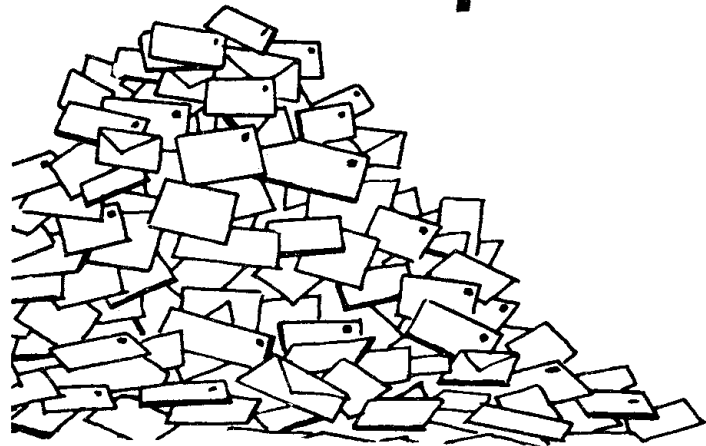
YOU CAN REACH your goal in life in spite of poverty. “Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Jackson, and a number of our Presidents started life in the poorest of homes, with little education and no advantages. Thomas Edison was a newsboy on trains. Andrew Carnegie started work at \$4 a month; John D. Rockefeller at about \$6 a week.” The remarkable thing about Abraham Lincoln was not that he was born in a log cabin but that he got out of the log cabin. Poverty may be a blessing in disguise. Don’t let poverty keep you from fulfilling your dreams.

DARE TO DREAM—in spite of circumstances and handicaps. “Demosthenes, the greatest orator of the ancient world, stuttered! The first time he tried to make a public speech, he was laughed off the rostrum. Julius Caesar was an epileptic. Napoleon was of humble parentage, and far from being a born genius (he stood forty-sixth in his class of sixty-five). Beethoven was deaf, as was Thomas Edison; Charles Dickens was lame; so was Handel. Homer was blind; Plato was a hunchback; Sir Walter Scott was paralyzed. But each dared to dream.”—*Pulpit Helps*



READERS'

... Response



GHANA, WEST AFRICA:

■ *"Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!*
"Recently, I was looking through the magazines at our church library and I discovered some of your...magazine THE SWORD AND STAFF and some tracts.
"In fact, I enjoyed reading them very much. So I would appreciate it very much if you will be sending me some of your magazine and other materials."

MICHIGAN:

■ *"Just noticed we need to renew our subscription to THE SWORD AND STAFF. Hope this helps a little. We're still reaping the benefits from your visit here and will always be grateful that we were able to meet you and to grow deeper in our love for you and Freda. God bless you."*
■ *"A friend highly recommended your publication; please add me to your mailing list."*

PENNSYLVANIA:

■ *"After receiving a copy of THE SWORD AND STAFF I wanted to read more of them. They are written so beautifully. I would like to receive them...I have recently toured Israel and Egypt which was so very real and inspirational. THE SWORD AND STAFF also is very meaningful."*

NORTH CAROLINA:

■ *"I'm writing this letter to let you all know that I would like to be put on your mailing list for THE SWORD AND STAFF newsletter and also to tell you I am a prisoner...I really would like to receive THE SWORD AND STAFF."*

GEORGIA:

■ *"I have been receiving your paper THE SWORD AND STAFF for many, many years. It is certainly one of the finest publications I have ever read. Keep up the*

good work..."

IOWA:

■ *"We sure enjoy THE SWORD AND STAFF...The Editorial Comments back in your paper in the year 1981 on this thing of Christmas. I think it is really something when Christian people still keep this day. We gave it up about thirty years ago. If I had some of these copies, I would give them to Christian people, praying they would wake up. . ."*
(EDITOR'S NOTE: I'm very sorry, but we do not have any individual copies available).

OKLAHOMA:

■ *"We do enjoy so much this excellent material that we read in THE SWORD AND STAFF. It's so good to know that we can depend on it being the truth. I'm afraid there are all too many who are moving out into 'broader' circles these days. . .Continue to print the truth, Brother Gibbons, there are many who appreciate it."*

OREGON:

■ *"Your paper is much appreciated. It's clear cut articles and sermons leave no doubt in the reader's minds."*
■ *"We did not order this! Refused!"*

THE SCULPTOR

I TOOK a piece of plastic clay and idly fashioned it, one day, and as my fingers pressed it, still it moved and yielded to my will.
I came again, when days were passed, that bit of clay was hard at last, the form I gave it still it bore, and I could change that form no more.
Then I took a piece of living clay and gently formed it, day by day, and moulded with my power and art a young child's soft and yielding heart.
I came again when years were gone, it was a man I looked upon. He still that early impression bore, and I could change it, nevermore.—ANON.

FINAL BIBLE LANDS TOUR—1987—PLANS

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GENTLEMEN:

Understanding this does not obligate me, I would like my name and address put in your files as one who is interested in being a part of the final Bible lands tour now planned. I understand that you will keep me informed as to the developments and plans more in detail, especially as the time draws near.

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Telephone.....

(Clip and Mail)



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- ☐ *Our Great and Glorious God*—25¢ each.
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- ☐ *Are Visions, Dreams, and Religious Experiences Proof of Salvation?*—7¢ each.
- ☐ *Every Sunday?*—3¢ each.
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- ☐ Note: Variety of “free” material available when ordering other material (above).

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- ☐ 1980-81-82 bound vol. of *The Sword and Staff*—\$4.75

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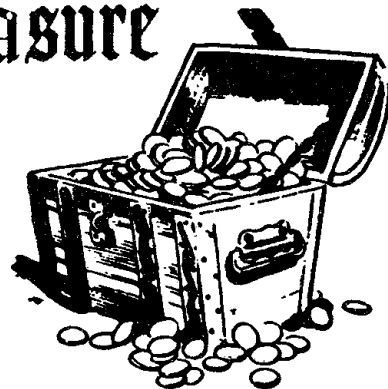
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NOTE: when placing an order for our other material, the following “free” leaflets are available in quantities at request:

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