

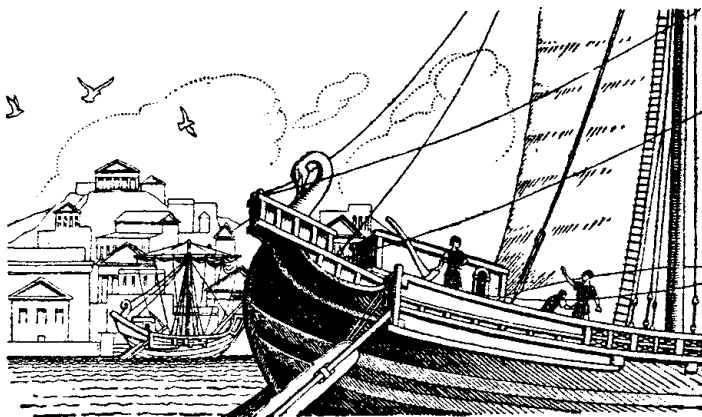
# The Sword AND Staff

*“Preach the Word” (II Timothy 4:2) • “Feed the Flock” (I Peter 5:2)*

## “When Lydia and Her Household Were Baptized” (Acts 16:15, NKJV)

**WE HEAR** the word “when,” and we think in terms of the time, occasion, or point that something happens. The word can be used to state a fact that such has taken place or is anticipated. Like the word “whenever,” it can sometimes indicate that it happens every time. It can imply that what takes place is the ordinary and expected course of action or is usual under the circumstances. This is especially obvious when our background knowledge of such occurrences all points in this direction. What we know has simply been verified.

With all of this in mind, let us look into several verses of Scripture that make use of the word “when” in this way. Things are spoken of taking place as a matter of course, as that which is expected, and as that which is usual. This study should make the truths considered more emphatic and obvious. The Lord intended for them to be universal and commonly practiced.—Editor



● By **JAMES E. GIBBONS**—1535 Fairfield Drive  
Mt. Airy, N.C. 27030 U.S.A.

**WHAT** we read in this section of Scripture (Acts 16:9-15) sort of ends one stage and begins another in a captivating series of world-changing events.

The Lord had left his disciples with the imperative Great Commission just before he went back to heaven (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16). With the establishment of the church in Jerusalem, although they were very evangelistic, they were slow in moving on out into the Gentile world with the gospel. But before long they were divinely shaken

from their sectarian Jewish shackles by God Himself. With this having been reluctantly accomplished, that great church among the Gentiles in Antioch of Syria came into being. Then it became a staging center in spearheading world evangelism.

From this base of operation Paul and Barnabas moved westward with the gospel, touching first the isle of Cyprus and then making a thrust into the mainland of Asia Minor. Great victories were won. After report having been made to the Antioch church, Paul along with Silas this time visited the new churches that had been started in southern Asia Minor to encourage and strengthen them. On this trip a valuable co-worker named Timothy was enlisted into their ranks. The urgency of their message again moved them on through Asia Minor, the Holy Spirit charting their course. They finally found themselves at a place called Troas on the northwestern coast of Asia Minor.

Now we read, “And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us.’ Now after he had seen the vision, immediately

(Continued on Page 4)

**THE SWORD AND STAFF**  
Post Office Box 147  
Mt. Airy, N.C. 27030 U.S.A.

**INFORMATION:**

■ We are totally dependent upon your financial backing in the publication of this religious paper. To get on the mailing list, send a contribution. Subsidizing gifts are definitely needed along for us to continue this unselfish labor of love for God and truth. You may use the date affixed beside your address as a reminder to send an offering (perhaps annually). No notices are sent. Make out your checks to CHURCH IN MOUNT AIRY. The extent (and frequency) of publication is determined by incoming support. James E. Gibbons is editor. (Money received for printed material is all considered as an offering). —THANK YOU— □

## Proverbially **SPEAKING...**

**CHRISTIANITY** sanctifies everything that it touches.

"They who let Wisdom cry, and pay no heed, shall cry to her in their turn, and be unnoticed" (Proverbs 1:20-23).

*As we travel through life, not only should we take time to smell the roses, we should pick a few along the way.*

"People who think that money grows on trees are the ones who have a hard time getting out of the woods."

*A rising tide lifts all boats, so beware of the humanism and ungodliness that engulfs our land lest we lose our moorings.*

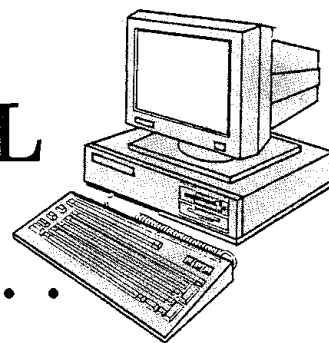
"He who begins by erasing the first commandment will sooner or later make a clean sweep of all the ten."

*Things! Things! Things!—When everybody "does his own thing," it seems to involve only things (Luke 12:15).*

"Nothing can take pleasure out of life more quickly than putting too much pleasure into it."

*A person all wrapped up in clothes, pardon the pun, is called a "clothes horse."*

# EDITORIAL COMMENTS...



## THE WORDS TRANSLATED "NEW" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

**WITHOUT** being a scholar in reference to the language of the New Testament, but as a humble and very elementary student we still can profit from word studies. All have access to the tools of study if they would but avail themselves of them and use them.

We found the following very interesting. There are two different words translated "new" in the New Testament, **kainos** and **neos**. **Kainos** means new in reference to quality (that which is fresh, implying character and quality). **Neos** means new in reference to time.

### Kainos, New in Reference to Quality

It is with significance that Jesus used the word **kainos** when he spoke of the coming "**new** testament" in connection with the Lord's supper (Mark 14:24). Looking upon the Old Testament as indeed old and in a state of decay even in Jeremiah's day (Hebrews 7:13), the writer of Hebrews pointed to something better, "For if the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault...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" (Hebrews 8:6-13). Every place that the "new testament" (or new covenant) is mentioned in the

## That Which We Cannot Pay

If we put off until tomorrow  
That which we should have done today  
And from the future try to borrow  
To have more time for "fun and play,"  
It will but bring regret and sorrow  
And leave our world in disarray  
When we at last are made to know  
That which we owe we cannot pay.

—James E. Gibbons

New Testament, except one (Heb. 12:24), it is the new of quality. This sets the stage for all of the wonderfulness, completeness, and quality to be found in the New Testament. The law of sin and death had served its purpose and now was being replaced with redemption, life and hope in Christ. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

The apostle Paul further highlights this word **kainos** when in II Corinthians 5:17 he declared, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a **new** creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become **new**." The root of this word also is present in Romans 6:4 when he wrote, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in **newness** of life." Jesus had said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10b). Quality living on a higher plain now was in store for the Christian. How wonderful! In this kind of living, among many other wonderful things, the **new** commandment of Christ is put into practice. Christ said, "A **new** commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34). The newness of quality here has to do with loving one another "as" he has loved us. Such love is unsurpassed.

This "**kainos**" kind of new will finally take us to a better place where all things will be made **new**. In the language of that great book of prophecy, John stated, "And I saw a **new** heaven and a **new** earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, **new** Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things **new**. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful" (Revelation 21:1-5).

#### Neos, New in Reference to Time

An interesting use of both words for "new," **kainos** and **neos**, is found in Matthew 9:17, "Neither do men put **new** (**neos**) wine into old bottles: else

the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put **new** (**neos**) wine into **new** (**kainos**) bottles, and both are preserved." Men put wine that was new in reference to time (**neos**, grape juice that had just come from the grapes) into new wineskins (**kainos**, new in reference to quality; not old wineskins that would be dry and brittle and thus not able to withstand the pressure of the grape juice when it started to ferment).

This new in reference to time, **neos**, is many times translated "young" and "younger" (Luke 15:12; 22:26; John 21:18; Acts 5:6; I Timothy 5:1,2,11,14; Titus 2:4,6; I Peter 5:5). We can see the force of this word as it is used as a prefix in compound words. In giving the qualifications of an elder, Paul stated that he was not to be "a **novice**, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil" (I Timothy 3:6). In other words, he was not to be a new convert, a **neophyte** (see the prefix). Being a Christian only a short period of time, he was **new** (and thus inexperienced). Likewise this can be seen in the name of the seaport town of Philippi, which was Neapolis (Acts 16:11). Notice the word: **Neos + polis** (literally, new town or city). It had been built after Philippi. It was new in reference to time.

All of this is very interesting, to say the least, but as we bring these comments to a conclusion let us realize that we are entering into a new year humanly speaking. What kind of a new year will it be for us? Will it be the "new" of quality, or just another year in reference to time? If we are a Christian, we are already on the right track. Now let us enter into the fullness of the quality living the Lord has laid out for us and continually experience the newness that unfolds before us.

Happy **new** year! □

---

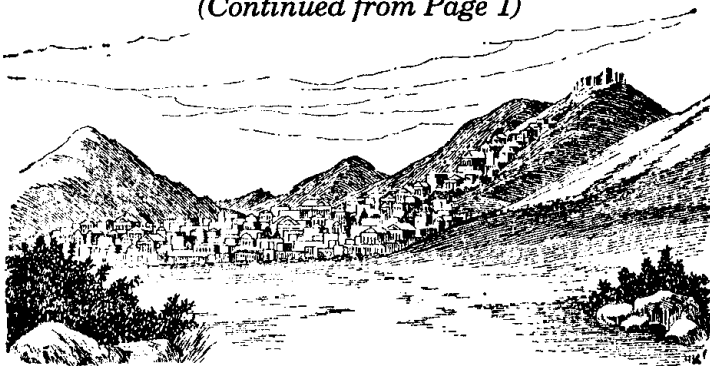
## Losing That Which We Do Not Use

**ANY WAY** that you look at it, that which we fail to use we lose. One of the ways is in teaching. If we no longer teach a doctrine, we will soon no longer believe it (if we haven't, in fact, lost that conviction already), as well as not practice it. An apostate condition sets in without us hardly knowing it. So, let us faithfully and consistently teach and stand for all of the teachings of the Word of God all of the time. When convictions have been lost, or eroded, in a church, it is awfully hard to reclaim them.

Consider Matthew 28:20; Acts 20:26,27; Acts 2:42; Hebrews 2:1.—**J.E.G.** □

## **“When Lydia and Her Household Were Baptized” (Acts 16:15)**

*(Continued from Page 1)*



Philippi

we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them” (Acts 16:9,10). How intriguing! The gospel of Christ was now on the verge of completely breaking loose from its narrow Eastern confines truly to become a world religion. A day’s journey across the Aegean Sea would change the history of Europe forever. (And as this Scripture indicates by the “we” and “us” mode of reference, they have added another important party to their evangelistic team, Luke).

Interestingly, but only initially, the man from Macedonia in Paul’s vision turned out to be a little band of women. Paul’s party disembarked at Neapolis, the seaport town of Philippi in Macedonia. Then after they had been in Philippi several days, we read, “And on the Sabbath we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there. Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshipped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken of Paul” (Acts 16:13,14). Philippi was a Roman colony, and from all indications with no Jewish synagogue, which explains why they were worshipping on the river bank. And, evidently Lydia had made her residence here for commercial reasons. Being a Roman colony, it would be an ideal market for the kind of product she had to sell, purple (the color/material worn by Roman officials). So, now in this Gentile setting, some Jewish women become Paul’s first converts in his response to the Macedonian call. The gospel of Christ was presented. Lydia had an open heart, and the inevitable happened. The record simply states, “And when she and her household were baptized...” (Acts 16:15).

Yes, **“And when she and her household were baptized”**—the simplicity of this statement overwhelms us. As a matter of course she and her household were baptized like everyone else who

became Christians. It was the ordinary and expected course of action. It is plainly implied, and understood, that everyone who accepted Christ was baptized. The early church knew of no one professing to be a Christian without baptism. Such a concept was not introduced until years later. However, in denominational circles today this errant view abounds.

### **The Great Commission**

At this point it is well for us to take a look at the Great Commission which has already been mentioned. With his earthly mission now accomplished, the Lord gives what we know as the Great Commission. A world lost in sin could now be saved.

The giving of the Great Commission by our Lord is plainly and powerfully presented in Matthew 28:18-20 and Mark 16:15,16. “Then Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age’ (Matthew). “And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned’ (Mark).

We can likewise plainly summarize what the Great Commission entails. His disciples were to go, teaching all nations, and those who responded in the affirmative were to be baptized. Then they were to be taught to observe all things that the Lord had commanded. Besides teaching them to observe all of the other great things the Lord had taught, this would also involve this commission being given all over again to each new disciple (because that was part of “all things” he had commanded), and the commission said: *Go, teach, baptize, and teach men to observe all things*. Every new convert would be commissioned all over again. This would be carried out until the end of the world.

The wording in Mark’s account is a little different as this commission was repeated many times to the disciples after the Lord’s resurrection. Mark’s account is more concise and explicit. They were to go into all the world, and instead of saying the gospel was to be preached to “all nations,” he narrows it down to “every creature.” And of “every creature” who heard, those who responded in faith were to be baptized, for he said, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved.”

All of this makes it plain, very plain, why we read over in Acts 16:15, **“And WHEN she [Lydia]**

**and her household were baptized."** The Lord commanded being baptized, it was expected, and it took place as a matter of course. It was all part of responding to, and accepting, the message of the Great Commission. It involved the response of "every creature." This is the way it would be until the end of the age, the "world." To deviate from the Great Commission is to disenfranchise ourselves from working under the Great Commission. Only in faithfully carrying out this commission can we claim the promise of the Lord being with us always until the end of the world.

### The Book of Conversions

The book of Acts has been called the "book of conversions," and rightly so. It follows the gospel accounts of the life of Christ in the New Testament. Here we see the establishment of the church and the execution of the Great Commission. Here we see that the experience of Lydia and her household was one in common with others who accepted Christ. There is much more to becoming a Christian than being baptized, but the purpose of this present study prompts the attention we are giving to this subject as we look through the book of Acts.

### Initial Response to the Gospel



The second chapter of Acts presents the promised coming of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the church with power on the Day of Pentecost after the Lord's return to glory. The gospel in its fullness is first preached by Peter and the other apostles to thousands of people. Peter concluded his incredible message by saying, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (2:36). How these guilt and awe stricken people responded to Peter's preaching, what he told them, and what happened that day are profoundly interesting as well as revealing. Let us read the account further.

"Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter

said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.' And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, 'Be saved from this perverse generation.' Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them" (2:37-41).

Please notice. These believing people were told to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins and they would receive the Holy Spirit. Remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit come with baptism, having truly believed and repented. (Read it again, if you don't believe this, 2:38; 5:32; 22:16; Galatians 3:27). Notice further: Peter told them this promise was not only to them (if they would repent and be baptized), but to all men for all time. It was to their children, to all who were afar off (Gentiles, Ephesians 2:11-19), and to "as many as the Lord our God will call." This is all in keeping with the Great Commission, which included baptism and was to be carried out unto the end of the world.

Having said these things, Peter presses the claims of the gospel more personally upon these people with his words of exhortation. They are admonished, "Be saved from this perverse generation." How did they respond? **"Then they** who gladly received his word **were baptized,"** and in doing this they were "added" to the church. When we receive Christ, we must be baptized. It is that simple. That is the universal plan. That is why we read later in Acts of Lydia, **"And when she and her household were baptized..."** This takes place as a matter of course.

### Response to Philip's Preaching

After Pentecost the church in Jerusalem thrived and experienced such phenomenal growth that its success brought on the hostilities of the Jewish authorities. So many were leaving the ranks of the established religion that outright persecution was eventually inevitable. After repeated warnings and scourgings, Stephen became the first Christian martyr. A house to house search resulted in followers of Christ being violently committed to prison. With the exception of the apostles, those not put in prison fled the city.

The devil miscalculated. Instead of destroying the church, the persecution accelerated its growth with the spread of the gospel. "Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the gos-

(Continued on Next Page)

## “When Lydia and Her Household Were Baptized” (Acts 16:15)

(Continued from Page 5)

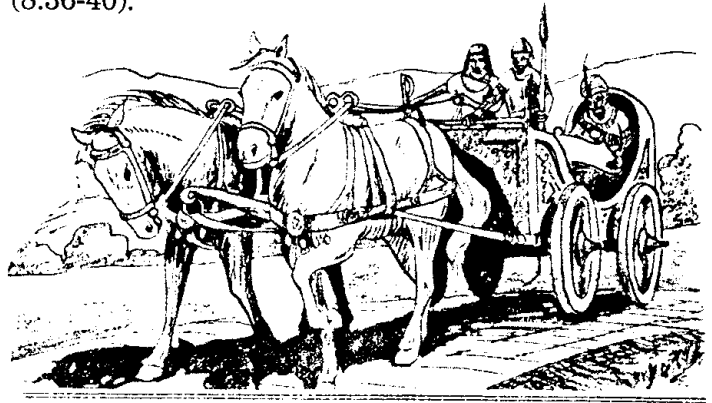
pel” (Acts 8:4ff). Philip is singled out as an example of this. We read, “Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them” (8:5).

In keeping with the theme of this article, notice what happened. “...**When** they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, *both men and women were baptized*. Then Simon himself also believed; and **when** he was baptized he continued with Philip...” (8:12,13). This is reminiscent of Lydia’s conversion: “**And WHEN she and her household were baptized...**” And, Philip was faithfully working under the Great Commission as he taught and complied with what the Lord had commanded (Mark 16:15,16). The people in Samaria were doing what everyone must do in accepting Christ.

The good work of Philip in Samaria was abruptly cut short as the Lord spoke to him through an angel. “Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza” (8:26). Now miles removed from Samaria, he hears the steady hoof-beat of horses instead of the noise and sounds of a city. In this solitary place there is a distinguished looking gentlemen riding a chariot. And, catching up with the chariot, the sounds of Scripture being read aloud fall upon Philip’s ears. An exchange of words takes place, and before we know it Philip is up in the chariot explaining the Scripture to the rider. The rider turns out to be an official of highest rank in the Ethiopian government who was returning from a religious trip to Jerusalem. Evidently while there he had acquired a scroll that now was intensely occupying his attention. Without hesitation he invites Philip to explain it to him.

The Ethiopian was reading from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. Without hesitation Philip gets right into the meaning of this great Scripture. “Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him” (Acts 8:35ff). Notice this exciting event as it unfolds and comes to a climax. “Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the [Ethiopian] eunuch said, ‘See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?’ Then Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ And he answered and said, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’ So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the [Ethiopian] eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord

caught Philip away, so that the [Ethiopian] eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing” (8:36-40).



Everything that we read here bears out the theme of this article. Philip preached Jesus to this man. The next thing we know they are coming by some water, and the Ethiopian wants to be baptized. How did he know about baptism? Philip preached Jesus to him, and, working under the Great Commission, in preaching Jesus one of necessity must tell about baptism. Becoming a Christian involves a sinner believing and personally being identified with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ in baptism (Romans 6:1-6,17; Mark 16:15, 16). Philip told the Ethiopian he could be baptized if he believed with all of his heart. He responds immediately with a full-fledged, heart-felt confession of faith. The chariot is brought to a halt. He is immersed into Christ. Everyone is thrilled about what has taken place.

Again all of this happens as the ordinary course of action. Like Lydia and her household, it was just a matter of “when.” Every one in becoming a Christian was, and is, baptized. Only denominational bias would say otherwise.

### Unusual, But No Exception

As stated at the beginning of this article, the early church was slow in taking the gospel to the Gentiles. It makes us wonder what they really thought the Great Commission meant. God had to intervene from heaven in a very extraordinary and unusual way to prod them into doing that which should have been ordinary and usual all along. We are talking about the initial conversion of Gentiles in the household of Cornelius.

The tenth chapter of Acts gives us a record of this. Cornelius was a Roman military man who had been stationed in Palestine in the line of duty. He was very impressed with the Jewish religion, finding it superior to anything he knew in paganism. Although not a full-fledged proselyte to Judaism, he feared God and lived accordingly. Consequently, God chose this man to be the first Gentile convert to



Christianity. God used that apostle and spokesman from the Day of Pentecost to bring this about.

The paths of Peter and Cornelius were made to cross in a most unusual way as God brought them together. First, an angel appeared to Cornelius, telling him to send for Peter who at that time was at Joppa. The angel said, "He will tell you what you must do" (10:6). The next day as the men from Cornelius approached where Peter was staying, Peter likewise had an unusual experience. As he prayed about noon, he fell into a trance and saw a vision. Being a Jew, it was very disconcerting to him when he was told in the vision to eat the unclean creatures that appeared. But a voice said, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." This happened three times. Peter was reassured by a voice that said, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." Then the men sent by Cornelius arrive. Thereupon the Holy Spirit instructed Peter to go with them, "doubting nothing; for I have sent them." With some Jewish brethren accompanying them, they go as a group to Ceasarea and to Cornelius.



By-passing many of the details of this exciting episode, we now find Peter standing before Cornelius and his waiting household that had assembled. The angel had told Cornelius that Peter would tell him what he "must do." Now Cornelius speaks to Peter, "So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear *all things commanded* you by God" (10:33). Later Peter recalled what took place and was said that day. Before the brethren in Jerusalem he was called upon to give his personal account of why he went into a Gentile's house. He told them how that Cornelius had seen an angel in his house, who said to him, "Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon who surname is Peter, who will

tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved" (11:13b-15). Peter continued, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning."

Notice. Peter said this happened as he "began to speak." The original account in Acts 10:34ff reads, "Then Peter opened his mouth and said: 'In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.' He begins to tell about Jesus, and before he can finish his speaking the outpouring of the Holy Spirit abruptly occurs. This happened before he could tell them what they "must do," "all things commanded" him of God, and "words by which Cornelius and all his household could be saved" (10:6,33; 11:14). Those "of the circumcision" (Jewish Christians) who had come with Peter were startled.



As pointed out before, Peter later told the Jerusalem brethren that "the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning" (11:15). This statement implies several things. The beginning was Pentecost in Acts 2. What happened with the household of Cornelius and how it took place were very similar to what took place on the Day of Pentecost; the outpouring of the Holy Spirit came directly from heaven with miraculous manifestations. Also, it is implied that the phenomena of Pentecost and the household of Cornelius were not universal, everyday experiences. Otherwise he would not have pointed back to Pentecost to illustrate this, "as upon us at the beginning."

Yes, the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius "as" upon them at Pentecost, but there are differences as well as similarities. The apostles who received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost were already disciples of Christ (and in the ranks of the saved). The household of Cornelius was unsaved (11:14). The Holy Spirit came upon the apostles to empower them to be witnesses (John 15:26,27; Acts 1:1-8; 2:43; 4:33). The Holy Spirit came upon the household of Cornelius as a witness (10:44-48; 11:17,18; 15:7,8); a witness that the

(Continued on Page 12)

# Religious People Busy in Pursuit of the Material Today

**RELIGIOUS PEOPLE** today are so busy in the pursuit of material things that they don't take time to read or study their Bibles and, consequently, depend on "their" preacher for the understanding of it. At the same time, "their" preacher is so busy taking care of the spiritual needs of those who are "so busy" that they don't take time to study their Bibles that he has little time for an in-depth study of the Bible himself. Consequently, customized and prefabricated literature is used in class studies, which many times is shallow and anemic. Entertainment and pabulum are a constant diet. Obviously, this is not a spiritual climate, nor is real spiritual growth much in evidence. We can hardly expect people to know much about the Bible if they never study it, nor will any great Bible scholars come out of situations like this (and they abound today).—*J.E.G.* □



# How the Ancient Indians Trapped Alligators in Florida

**WE ARE** told how the ancient Indians in Florida trapped the alligator, the massive tail being used as a very meaty food source. Two rows of very heavy stacks made from rough poles were driven into the earth, forming a duct like conduit wide enough for an alligator to enter but at the same time narrow enough to make it impossible for him to turn around. The alligator was allured by bait into the conduit, then he would soon find he could go no farther. And since alligators will not back up, only go forward, he would be trapped. The stacks, while not allowing an exit, at the same time made it so that he couldn't do anything else either. Thus, hemmed in, and utterly refusing to back up or back down, he was caught in a death trap. Although struggling and floundering as spears pierced him, he was the victim of his own doings and obstinacy. He would not back down.

And how like human beings is this situation. Anger gets us into trouble, and then pride keeps us there. Having been foolishly brought into the conduit of a very difficult situation, we refuse to admit that we are wrong. We make strong assertions, which may prove to be wrong, but we refuse to back down. Thus caught in the trap of our own doings and obstinacy, we flounder there.

The Bible says, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16: 18). Wouldn't it be much better simply to say, "I am sorry. I was wrong. Please forgive me"? "Be clothed

with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (I Peter 5:5b).—*J.E.G.* □

# BIBLE QUESTIONS

## (Random Questions Over the Bible)

1. On what two occasions did Abraham "pass off" his wife Sarah as his sister (and she was his half-sister)?
2. Were there any other cities destroyed when God rained fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah in judgment, and if so, what cities?
3. The wife of which one of the patriarchs died in childbirth, and what was her name?
4. In the song of Moses, what unusual words describe how the water of the Red Sea parted and stood as a wall as the Israelites went through on dry ground?
5. What is the meaning of the word "manna," the food God provided for the children of Israel in their wilderness journey?
6. What was the means of capital punishment used in ancient Israel, who personally carried it out, and who were to take the first steps in doing this?
7. According to the Bible, how many proverbs did Solomon speak, and how many songs?
8. What person visited Solomon upon hearing of his fame and afterwards said, "Behold, the half was not told me"?
9. What do these words mean as found in the Bible, "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN"?
10. Which of the gospel writers tells of angels ministering to Jesus following the fasting and temptation in the wilderness?
11. Only what two miracles of Jesus, in a sense, seem to have been destructive in nature?
12. What was the name of the blind man Jesus healed as he passed through Jericho on the way to Jerusalem just before his crucifixion?
13. Which of the gospel writers tells of an angel from heaven appearing and strengthening Jesus as he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane?
14. How many times is the word "paradise" found in the New Testament, and where are the references?
15. How many times is the word "evangelist" found in the New Testament, and where are the references?
16. How many times is the word "Christian" found in the New Testament, and where are the references?
17. Which two apostles were involved in the miracles of raising someone from the dead, and what were the names of those raised?
18. Who said the following and to whom: "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"?
19. What does the word "abba" mean that is found several times in the New Testament Scriptures?
20. What two reasons are given by the apostle Paul as to why women are not permitted to teach or usurp authority over man in the assembly of the church?

(NOTE: *Answers found elsewhere in this issue of the paper.*)



# READERS'

## ...Response



### FLORIDA:

■ "Please delete us from your mailing list."

■ "I appreciate your stand for God's truth, for it seems that it's getting more difficult each year to hear the truth!!!

"Enclosed is a small donation to help with your expenses."

■ "I first want to thank you for the wonderful work you are doing for the Lord. It is refreshing to the soul to be able to read plain, simple truths.

"I want to order ten *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*. Also enclosed with payment of the books is contribution to help with the work you are doing...

"May God bless you as you continue your work and those who participate."

### TENNESSEE:

■ "My husband and I have enjoyed *THE SWORD AND STAFF* so much and thank God that there are a few left who have the nerve to teach the TRUTH as it is. I wish the whole world could receive *THE SWORD AND STAFF* and would take heed. That's a big order, isn't it?..."

### VIRGINIA:

■ "I sincerely enjoy *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. Thanks for a fine job of 'crying out and sparing not.' May God continue to bless your ministry. TO GOD BE THE GLORY."

■ "I have enjoyed reading your publication. I have just become a Christian in the Fall of '93,' and am trying to learn.

"I have some really good help from my Christian friends and family. Your publication is really inspiring. I would like the 91-92 bound volume. I would also like your future publication. Here is my check to help continue the Lord's work."

### OHIO:

■ "Please take my name off the mailing list."

■ "Please send 10 copies of *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*."

■ "Impressed with your paper. Glad someone else, besides our family, sees some of these holidays for what they are—pagan..."

■ "...Thank you for your work and dedication to the Lord. *THE SWORD AND STAFF* is a blessing to me. Praise God for men like you! Keep up the good work."

■ "Enclosed is a money order to pay for past issues of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*."

"Your journal has served me well in my ministry for many years! The food for thought has helped me in the areas of critical thought and self examination."

■ "Please send me two copies of your book *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*. I am enclosing... I really enjoy reading *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I am the secretary at my church and find your publication very helpful in my work. Thank you for the good work that you do and I know that you do it for the Lord. May God continue to bless you."

### MICHIGAN:

■ "We thoroughly enjoy your paper. We pray that it will continue!"

■ "Thank you for taking the time to write *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I have been borrowing copies from friends for years. It's time to get my own. Please add my name to your mailing list."

### INDIANA:

■ "I appreciate *THE SWORD AND STAFF* and what it stands for, Christ and His Teachings. Keep on with the good work."

### ILLINOIS:

■ "I have been receiving *THE SWORD AND STAFF* a number of years, my name being on your mailing list through a dear friend in the Lord who has departed this life and has gone home to be with the Lord. You bring out so many important things for the Christian today. I admire your boldness and praise for the Lord. May God continue to bless you and your family and it is my pleasure to submit to you a gift a long time coming."

■ "...Your publication, the editorials and other comments in explaining and interpreting the Bible have caused me to take stock of my faulty existence, have shown me that I must do more to put my spiritual house in order and try to contribute to the battle of increasing sin in the world around me, to come all the way to Christ myself and strive to bring other souls to Him as well..."

### SOUTH DAKOTA:

■ "As a new year begins, I want to express my thanks to you...This, and the other four volumes I had ordered, have been the source of *much* comfort, enlightenment and knowledge. Thank you!"

(Continued on Next Page)

# READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

"It is a joy, also, as each new magazine arrives. It seems the articles get better and better. And I appreciate what you wrote about Christmas. When one lives in a place where many people reside, as I do, Christmas is not a joy! It is a time when people are 'picky,' grouchy, and many are sad. No amount of Santa Claus, trees, entertainment and 'goodies' will give them happiness. Only our Lord will give them happiness. Only our Lord and Savior can give them true happiness and peace.

"I really liked the 'Notes on I Timothy 2:9,10.' I wondered if these were 'notes' from one of your messages or studies. This is great. Such a lot of good and useful information.

"Will you be including studies such as this on other subjects? I hope you do.

"About I Timothy 2:9 & 10—

"I am a widow now, but when my husband was alive, I was given a dress that I liked very much, but it had quite a low neckline.

"When I appeared before my husband, wearing this dress, he said in his soft, kind way, 'I wish you wouldn't wear that.'

"For just a second I was angry, but immediately the Lord filled my heart with such love and appreciation that my husband cared enough to want me to look 'decent' for him and for the Lord. Christian husbands can be a great help to their wives in this.

"Again—thank you! May the Lord bless you and your family.

"I am looking forward already to the 1993-94 bound volume. I pray that the Lord will give you health and strength to continue this work that is blessing and strengthening so many."

## NEVADA:

■ "Thanks for the good paper! We know it bears fruit."

## CALIFORNIA:

■ "Please remove our name from your mailing list. This is our second request."

## OREGON:

■ "I don't know who gave you my address, but I do appreciate.

"Your strong stand for the truth is wonderful, and something you don't hear much any more!! God bless you and keep preaching the truth!

"I was taught and immersed into Christ by \_\_\_\_\_. He too preached the Word and I miss him since his death..."

## PHILIPPINES:

■ "In the first place, may I extend my Christian greetings to you and all staffers of your most valued publication THE SWORD AND STAFF..."

"For your information, I came across one time reading your magazine from a Christian friend. The contents of which are very interesting, easy to understand, and I believe very instrumental in re-enforcing Bible lessons. I am a church leader...and at the same time a Bible teacher.

"I will be very glad if you can count me as a new and regular subscriber of your magazine.

"Thank you very much. May GOD bless richly."

## KOREA:

■ "We have received THE SWORD AND STAFF and really appreciate your graciousness in sending it. We have truly enjoyed it, please thank whoever is making it possible.

"Enclosed is a check for...POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS by James E. Gibbons. If there is any additional charges, please let me know and I will reimburse you as soon as I receive your word."

## UGANDA:

■ "Greetings to you, your family and the saints there... let me hope this letter will find you enjoying good health.

"I and the church here have been blessed with messages through THE SWORD AND STAFF. Please continue to preach the Word. God will reward you for us in Uganda. We are praying for you and we are requesting you, if it is God's will, to send us 5 copies for the church...let me stop here for now. God bless you." □

**APOLOGY:** Please accept our humble apology for slowness in getting correspondence answered. "We" have no staff of secretaries, etc. to handle such, and this is done by the "editor" as time allows. Be it known that you are sincerely appreciated.

## Failed to Use Strength

THE STORY is told of a small boy trying very hard to lift a heavy stone. His father, happening by, and noticing the son's failure, said to him, "Are you using all your strength?"

"Yes, I am," the boy exclaimed impatiently.

"No," the father replied, "you are not. You haven't asked me to help."

We, who are Christians, are said to be the sons of God, and yet there are times when we need the help of someone to lift up our burdens, but we fail to call upon our heavenly Father for strength to carry our burdens. Peter wrote, "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you" (I Peter 5:7). Christians ought to use their strength by asking help from the Mighty God.—Selected □

## NOTES ON “NOTES ON I TIMOTHY 2:9,10”

● ***“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.”***

IN THE LAST ISSUE of this paper we presented some notes looking into what Paul meant when he wrote the above Scripture. It was somewhat of a word study. The examination was not intended for controversy, but to ascertain in love and humility the truth (and consequently godly edification). An argument has been submitted to us, stating that what Paul said was in some sense a Greek idiom and not an injunction (as it would appear in English). The “broided hair,” the “gold,” the “pearls,” and “costly array” really are not prohibited, but are simply stated to draw out the truth of the spiritual adornment of good works which he thereafter enjoins.

Did Paul mean gold, pearls, and costly array when he said this (and did Peter mean what he said when he wrote on the same subject, I Peter 3:1-6)? Early church writers following the apostles spoke Greek, wrote Greek, and were conversant in the language in a way that we could never hope to be. Some wrote in Latin, a step removed from Greek (but closer to Greek than English). How they understood Paul and Peter should have some weight on how we look at what they said. Did they regard the words of the apostles just as an idiom of their language, somehow not meaning what they seem to say in English?

At the risk of seeming offensive, we present some quotations from Tertullian (140-230 A.D.), Clement of Alexander (150-200 A.D.), and Cyprian (200-258 A.D.). It can at once be seen that their religious mind-set was very different from that of today's generation (which is steeped in materialism and worldliness). They even quote the apostle Paul and the apostle Peter. Were Paul's and Peter's words to them just empty idioms as far as the gold, pearls, and costly array were concerned? What understanding did these early church writers have of what Paul and Peter said? Read the quotations that follow and see what conclusion you reach.

● Tertullian in his writing *On Prayer* in chapter 20 speaks “of women's dress.” He wrote, “Touching modesty of dress, the prescription of Peter [I Peter 3:1-6] likewise is plain, checking as he does with the same mouth, because with the same Spirit, as Paul [I Timothy 2:9,10], the glory of garments, and the pride of gold, and the meretricious elaboration of the hair.”

● Clement of Alexander writes in his *The Instructor*, Book II, chapter 13, “But for those women who have been trained under Christ, it is suitable to adorn themselves not with gold, but with the Word, through whom alone the gold comes to light...Most admirably, therefore, the blessed Peter [Paul] says, ‘In like manner also, the women adorn themselves not with broided hair, or gold, or costly array, but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.’ [I Timothy 2:9,10]. For it is with reason that he bids decking of themselves to be kept far from them.”

● Cyprian in *The Treatises of Cyprian*, in Treatise II writes extensively “On the Dress of Virgins [Young Women],” dealing with it in 24 sections. Reading all of this would be a shock to the mentality of many religious people today, but here are some excerpts to illustrate just how they thought back then. Treatise II, section 8: “You call yourself wealthy and rich; but Paul meets your riches, and with his own voice prescribes for the moderating of your dress and ornament within a just limit. ‘Let women,’ said he, ‘adorn themselves with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, nor gold, nor pearls, nor costly array, but as becometh women professing chastity, with a good conversation [works].’ [I Timothy 2:9,10]. Also Peter consents to these same precepts, and says, ‘Let there be in the woman not the outward adorning of array, or gold, or apparel, but the adorning of the heart [I Peter 3,3,4].’” He goes on to say in section 13, “...adorned with gold, and pearls, and necklaces, they have lost the ornaments of the heart and spirit.”

In section 21, he admonishes, “Therefore hear me, O virgins [young women], as a parent; hear, I beseech you, one who fears while he warns; hear one who is faithfully consulting for your advantage and your profit. Be such as God the Creator made you; be such as the hand of your Father ordained you. Let your countenance remain in you incorrupt, your neck unadorned, your figure simple; let not wounds be

(Continued on Next Page)

## NOTES ON "NOTES ON I TIMOTHY 2:9,10" (Continued from Previous Page)

made in your ears, nor let the precious chain of bracelets and necklaces circle your arm or your neck; let your feet be free from golden bands, your hair stained with no dye, your eyes worthy of beholding God. Let your baths be performed with women, among whom your bathing is modest. Let the shameless feasts and lascivious banquets of marriages be avoided, the contagion of which is perilous. Overcome dress, since you are a virgin; overcome gold, since you overcome the flesh and the world. It is not consistent to be unable to be conquered by the greater, and to be found no match for the less. Strait and narrow is the way which leadeth to life..."

These quotations are from *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan.—J.E.G. □

## "When Lydia and Her Household Were Baptized" (Acts 16:15)

(Continued from Page 7)

Gentiles should be brought into the church. In the happenings leading up to this and in the actual outpouring, God was divinely demonstrating that they should be preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, too. Everybody got the point.

The Holy Spirit took over the vocal cords of Cornelius. He spoke with other languages and glorified God. (Yes, it was proper for Gentiles to praise God too). Peter hadn't yet told him what he personally "must do." Obviously he believed. Peter nor the household of Cornelius were afflicted with the fuzzy mentality that abounds in the religious world today. People today would say such a religious experience (or even a supposed one) would exempt them from further obedience, but not Peter or Cornelius. Peter understood what was going on. He responded, "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit [charismatic outpouring] just as we have?" (10:47). Yes, Gentiles were to receive the gospel. Then we read, "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (10:48a).

That which was extraordinary and unusual did not set aside what the Lord commanded in the Great Commission. This was no exception to the rule. After getting them to see that they should go to the Gentiles with the gospel, the rest of the Great Commission was not going to be left out now. What Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38), and later wrote in I Peter 3:21, was practiced here. Like when it took place with Lydia and her household, the "when" is now realized. They were baptized into Christ just like everyone else.

### Response at Philippi

We have already studied the response of Lydia and her household to the gospel at Philippi (Acts 16:11-15) as typical of all people turning to Christ.

### Honoring Praying Mothers



But this is not the only conversion on record that took place here (16:16ff). Paul and Silas found themselves thrown into jail as a result of casting the demon out of a slave girl used in fortune-telling. Her masters were very displeased that their profit from this means had been cut off. God intervened that night with a great earthquake that opened the doors of the prison and loosed everyone's chains. The jailor thought all of the prisoners had escaped and was ready to take his own life. He knew Roman law and knew how he would be dealt with by his superiors.

Here is the actual account of what happened next. "But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, 'Do yourself no harm, for we are all here.' Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and

said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' So they said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.' Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household" (16:28-34).

Perhaps he didn't know all that his question entailed, but somehow the pagan Philippian jailor had heard about salvation. Had the words that the demon-possessed girl disparagingly said about Paul and the other preachers been reported to him ("These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation," 16:17); which had prompted Paul to cast out the demon (and to be cast into prison)? Or was it from the singing of Paul and Silas that night in prison as their backs were bleeding? We don't know, but he did know enough to ask the right question, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

The immediate and responsive reply was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you, and your household." This was the right thing to say initially to such a one who knew so little about Christianity. Following this, the record says that "they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized." They needed to know more of the gospel message to respond intelligently, and they heard it. Evidence of repentance is seen in the jailor washing the stripes of Paul and Silas. Then the inevitable happened: "*And immediately he and all his family were baptized*" (just like Lydia and her household a few days before). The promise in the Great Commission was again claimed, which said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved." It all happens as a matter of course.

### Reponse at Corinth

Before looking at our final example in the "book of conversions," let us make notation of how people responded to the gospel in Corinth. "Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized" (Acts 18:8). This came about as a result of Paul's labors.

It is the same thing happening all over again. "And many of the Corinthians, *hearing, believed and were baptized.*" This illustrates again the truth about Lydia and her household.

### Responding the Right Way

The longest Paul ever stayed in one place evangelizing was at Ephesus. His protracted stay here of two years got off to a good start in an unusual way. We read that he "came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' And they said to him, 'We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.' And he said to them, 'Into what then were you baptized?' So they said, 'Into John's baptism.' Then Paul said, 'John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.' When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. Now there were about twelve in all" (Acts 19:1-7).

In a capsule, here is the situation; here is what happened. Paul, a man who is out to make disciples in Ephesus, comes across twelve men who claim to be disciples already. There was something about them that didn't ring true. Paul questioned them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" Their answer was that they had never heard of the Holy Spirit. This was perplexing to Paul since people are baptized "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the *Holy Spirit*" (Matthew 28:19) and since the Holy Spirit is given in connection with repentance and being baptized (Acts 2:38). This immediately prompted another question. "Into what then were you baptized?" They tell him "John's baptism," and that's all he needs to hear. John's baptism was no longer valid. It was a baptism used in getting Jewish people ready for the Christ. It served its purpose. Christ has come, and with his death and resurrection, the New Testament came in force (Hebrews 9:15-17). The baptism in the Great Commission would be in force until the "end of the world (age)." Evidently, like Apollos (Acts 18:24-26), the twelve had submitted to John's baptism somewhere this side of the cross. They hadn't heard the rest of the story. Since Christ had now come, there was only one thing left to do. "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." Thereupon, the regular gift and indwelling of the Holy Spirit was given them (Galatians 3:27; Acts 2:38; 5:32; I Corinthians 12:13). And to put "topping on the cake" of their experience, the apostle Paul imparts the special charismatic gift(s) of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of his hands (19:6; Acts 8:17-19; Hebrews 2:3,4). This

(Continued on Next Page)

# “When Lydia and Her Household Were Baptized” (Acts 16:15)

(Continued from Previous Page)

extraordinary phenomena served its valuable, but temporary, purpose in the early church (I Corinthians 13:8-10; etc.).

The truth we have been pointing out throughout this article in connection with the conversion of Lydia and her household is again verified. Paul questions about when these twelve men initially believed, and he ties New Testament baptism in with how it should have been. (*“Into what then were you baptized?”*) They now believe the message that Christ has come. *“WHEN they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”* This is the normal and expected course of action which always takes place as a matter of course. It is God’s universal plan. □



*How it all got started...*

## The Great Monkey Trial

**IT ALL** started with an insensitive word.

The famous Scopes Trial, better known by de Camp’s title, *The Great Monkey Trial*, was the event of the century for the quiet community of Dayton, Tennessee. In 1925 the opponents squared off. In one corner recoiled William Jennings Bryan, a three-time losing presidential candidate, whom the Fundamentalists enlisted to defend the cause of Christianity; in the other corner, the American Civil Liberties Union’s Clarence Darrow, the famous trial lawyer and skeptic. Anti-fundamentalist H. L. Mencken gave the world the blow-by-blow account of the event, the first to be nationally aired by radio. Near what was to be the end of the fight, Bryan made his crucial error: he accepted Darrow’s challenge to take the stand as an expert on the Bible. Within minutes Darrow knocked him out, and, for many, Christianity had sustained a debilitating loss.

Before Bryan left Dayton, Tennessee, he died.

The symbolism was complete.

But what set this course of events in motion?

A resident of Dayton, George Washington Rappleyea, though a native New Yorker and next to Scopes the only evolutionist in town, was the manager of the Cumberland Coal and Iron Company. After one of his workers lost his six-year-old son in a car-train accident, Rappleyea attended the funeral where he heard the child’s mother moan, “Oh, if I only knew he was with Jesus! If I only knew that!”

### Answers to:

## BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. Genesis 12:10-20; 20:1-18; 2. Genesis 19:24-29; Deuteronomy 29:23; 3. Genesis 35:16-20; 4. Exodus 15:8 (14:29); 5. Exodus 16:15, what is this?; 6. Leviticus 20:2,27; 24:23; Numbers 15:35,36; Deuteronomy 13:6-11; 17:2-7; Acts 7:58,59; 7. I Kings 4:32; 8. I Kings 10:1-10; 9. Daniel 5:25-28; 10. Matthew 4:11; 11. Mark 5: 1-17; Matthew 21:19; 12. Mark 10:46-52; 13. Luke 22:43; 14. Luke 23:43; II Corinthians 12:4; Revelation 2:7; 15. Acts 21:8; Ephesians 4:11; II Timothy 4:5; 16. Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; I Peter 4:16; 17. Acts 9:32-42; 20:6-16; 18. Acts 22:12-16; 19. Abba is an Aramaic word meaning father—Mark 14:36; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6; 20. I Timothy 2:11-15; 3:14,15.

Unfortunately the evolutionist also heard the preacher’s reply, “I’ll not lie to you even to bring you peace. The ways of the Lord are His. You know and everybody here knows that this boy had never been baptized. He never confessed Christ. There can be no doubt but that at this moment he is in the flames of Hell.”

Rappleyea—though not generally hostile toward religion, became incensed at the minister’s coldness—brought the ACLU’s offer to underwrite a test case against the anti-evolution law to the attention of the local people. Later Rappleyea told the press, “Well, a few days later, I heard that this same bunch, the Fundamentalists, had passed that anti-evolution law, and I made up my mind I’d show the world.”

It all started with an insensitive word from a self-avowed Christian!—**Stanley N. Helton** □



## Words and More Words

**COLORS** fade. Shorelines erode. Temples erode. Empires fall. But **suitable** words spoken under the right circumstances endure! Mark Twain once wrote: “The difference between the right word and almost the right word is the difference between lightning and lightning bug!”

Like Jell-O, concepts assume the mold of the words into which they are poured. Who has not been stabbed awake by the use of a particular word? Who has not found relief from a well-timed word spoken at the precise moment of need? Who has not been crushed in spirit through another’s word? Who has not gathered fresh courage because a word of hope penetrated the fog of self-doubt?

The finest examples of **suitable** words are the words and phrases of Jesus:

“And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose



that they will be heard for their many **words**" (Matthew 6:7).

"Therefore everyone who hears these **words** of mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock" (Matthew 7:24).

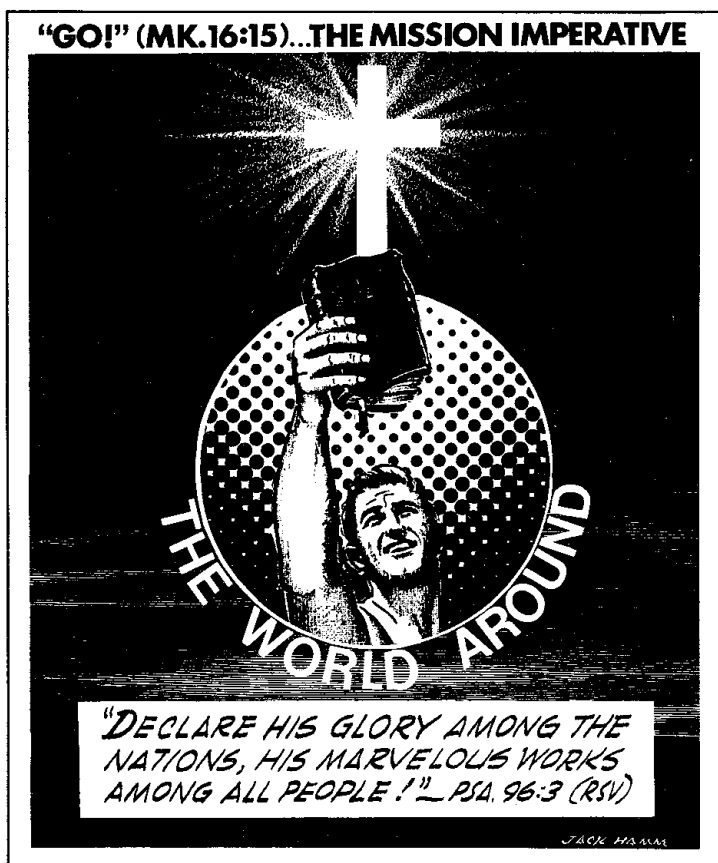
"For by your **words** you shall be justified, and by your **words** you shall be condemned" (Matthew 12:37).

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my **words** shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).

J.B. Phillips has correctly said: "If words are to enter men's hearts and bear fruit, they must be shaped cunningly to pass men's defenses and explode silently and effectually within their minds."

Jesus is the Master word smith! Listen and do...

—Mark Swindall □



## The Plight of America

**IN AMERICA** we are building super highways, but few travel the highway of holiness. We are building great cities but have little concern for the city foursquare whose builder and maker is God. We have conquered space but have failed to conquer Satan, sin and self. We are a land of guided missiles and misguided minds. We fear the H-bomb but have no fear of God before our eyes. We are building big-

ger and bigger institutions of learning while the knowledge of God and His Word is shelved. We enjoy more conveniences than most nations but these do not draw us closer to God. America has her days of celebrating when it would be better if she had her days of fasting, repenting and praying. America views the lusts on the screen when she should be reading the handwriting on the wall. The youth of the land listen to rock and roll when they should be heeding divine warnings and tuning in on the sweet music of heaven. America is feeding her mind with sensuality and obscenity when she should be searching the Scriptures daily. America is building bigger and better church buildings but at the same time building more and bigger prisons. Life is on a fast track that leaves no time for the needs of the soul. There have been great advances in medical science while more and more people are dying from nicotine, alcohol, drugs and suicide.

It is time for America to awake and to hear the words of the prophet of God. "Righteousness exalteth a nation but sin is a reproach to any people." □

—Dale Williamson, 1964



## An Ominous Similarity?

**THE DECLINE and Fall of the Roman Empire**, written in 1778 by Edward Gibbon, sets forth five basic reasons why that great nation withered and died. He lists:

1. The rapid increase of divorce with the undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the basis of human society.
2. Higher and higher taxes; the spending of public money for free bread and circuses for the populace.
3. The mad craze for pleasure; sports becoming more exciting, more brutal, every year.
4. The building of great armaments when the real enemy was within, in the decadence of the people.
5. The decay of religion; faith fading into mere form, losing touch with life, becoming impotent to guide the people.

Mr. Gibbon's list is a bit ominous, considering the trends of our present society. Perhaps Jesus' words of Luke 13:3 are fitting just here: "Except ye repent, ye shall likewise perish." □

—Selected



## A Setup for the Devil

**BEWARE!** When you become upset, you become a setup for the Devil (Ephesians 4:26,27). □

*Have You Ordered Yet?*  
**Poems of the Soul  
and Proverbs**

*By James E. Gibbons*

**THIS** different format in expressing truth makes for interest and appeal. Thus, people are ordering and keep ordering this little book of poems and proverbs by the editor. Here are some ways it is being used.

- For personal reading
- For personal gifts to friends
- To give to whole churches
- To use in preparing church bulletins
- To give to the sick and people in hospitals

It is suggested that you send \$5.00 for a single book, and if you order five or more, \$4.00 per book to help with the printing and mailing cost.

**PITHY POINTS TO PONDER**  
*(Proverbially Speaking)*

**TO ESCAPE** a life of shame and disgrace accept God's amazing grace.

*When we realize what a price was paid for our salvation, it makes it a lot easier for us personally to count the cost (Luke 14:25-33).*

A knife must have a little "edge" on it before it will cut, and likewise indefinite preaching does not get the job done.

*We need true religion not only to make us godly but to keep us from being animals.*

Many times you will find there are three sides to church problems: Your side, the other person's side, and God's side.

**(Clip, Fill in, Mail/or Write Otherwise)**

Gentlemen:

*Enclosed find my contribution. Please put me on the mailing list of **The Sword and Staff**. ☐ New ☐ Renew*

Name: .....

Address: .....

**(Check for bound volumes of The Sword and Staff)**

- ☐ 1985-86 bound volume of *The Sword and Staff*—\$6.95
- ☐ 1987-88 bound volume of *The Sword and Staff*—\$7.25
- ☐ 1989-90 bound volume of *The Sword and Staff*—\$7.25
- ☐ 1991-92 bound volume of *The Sword and Staff*—\$7.25
- ☐ **POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS** by James E. Gibbons—\$5.00 each; 5 or more copies, \$4.00 each.

# Treasure

MANY who love the Word of God have discovered Treasure much to their liking when they obtained the bound volumes of the back issues of *The Sword and Staff*. If you like this current issue, you will likewise be thrilled with the back copies in book form.



Notice those still available (while they are still available), and place your order now for good reading. Make them part of your library and part of your life. You will be glad that you ordered them. □

We walk by faith and not by sight, but hope invigorates the steps in this walk.

*Feet that are "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:15) do not make good dancing feet.*

Just think, if all Christians really were the light of the world, as Jesus said (Matthew 5:14), the world would soon find its way out of darkness.

*Even as God is still God, truth is still the truth even if no one believes it.*

Let us act firmly and affirmatively, instead of react, for the reactionary person eventually reacts against himself if he lives long enough.

● **HELP US REACH OUT TO MORE CHURCHES AND PEOPLE WITH THIS PUBLICATION—Thank you!**

**THE SWORD AND STAFF**  
Post Office Box 147  
Mt. Airy, N.C. 27030  
U.S.A.  
Telephone: (910) 789-1044

Non-Profit Organ.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Permit No. 25