

The Sword AND Staff

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

"Be Filled With the Spirit"—Ephesians 5:18

● **BY JAMES E. GIBBONS**

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AMAZING! What a fantastic and lofty thought that Deity would indwell earthly mortals, that we can actually be filled with the Spirit of the eternal God! But, is this something to be thought incredible or strange that God would take His abode in a godly person, a Christian? We think not. We are to "be filled with the Spirit."

Varied and Contradictory Viewpoints

This belief is not new, although there are many, varied, and contradictory viewpoints in the religious world today (and all of them are not enlightened).

Some blandly speak of the Holy Spirit, even his indwelling, and hurry on by. For all practical purposes He is nil and void in their lives. Others deify their human emotions, calling their feelings and thoughts the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (and crave some kind of emotional overwhelming as evidence of God's presence). Many peculiar things are identified as the working of the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, some flatly state that the Holy Spirit does not in-

dwell human beings, that we would be Deity if He did. Others say it would be equivalent to demon possession. Then others



from their human level of experience ask, "How can one person dwell in another?" And then we are told that the only way the Spirit indwells a Christian is through the Word. The Word is the Holy Spirit.

In reply to these opposing concepts, and our thoughts will be more fully developed in the words that follow, it is our conviction that we do not necessarily "feel" the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but because we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we feel. A

person does not feel life in his body, but because life is in his body, he feels. And as to how the Spirit specifically and empirically dwells in us, we do not have the answer. We do not even know how that our own spirit dwells in us, let alone the Holy Spirit. But we believe it. And the Word is no more the Holy Spirit than a person's words are that person.

Indwelling Individually and Collectively

We believe the New Testament teaches the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit in Christians, whether individually speaking or collectively. Many verses could be brought forward, but we will only present a few.

The apostle Paul asks the question, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [Spirit] which is *in you*, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (I Corinthians 6:19) Then in Romans 8:9 he says, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the *Spirit of God dwell in you*. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." So, the Holy Spirit is looked upon as dwelling in Christians individually.

Interestingly, Paul also asked in I Corinthians 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God,

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—THANK YOU—

Proverbially ***SPEAKING...***

TO FAIL to plan is to plan to fail.

In a sense prayer connects us with those for whom we pray, as well as connecting us with God.

The man who fears God has nothing else to fear.

As metal is solidly welded together by intense heat, so the closest friendships are forged in the common experience of adversity.

Quitting sin is not a matter of Christian growth, but of repentance.

When we look to the future, and press on with hope, our life will not be past tense.

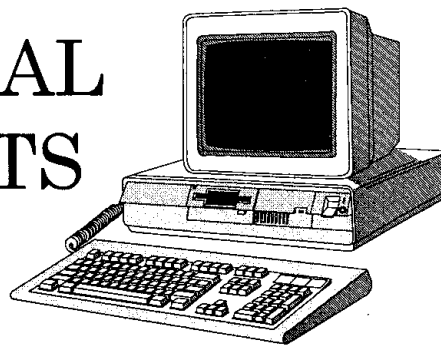
Life is too valuable to let the years slip by without living them.

Too many are more interested in polishing the sepulchres of the prophets (Matthew 23:29-32), with no intentions of doing what they said, than in going to the empty tomb and living the resurrected life.

Where will you be when you get where you are going?

It is hard for the weak to forgive for they are insecure and feel threatened and intimidated in doing so. □

EDITORIAL COMMENTS



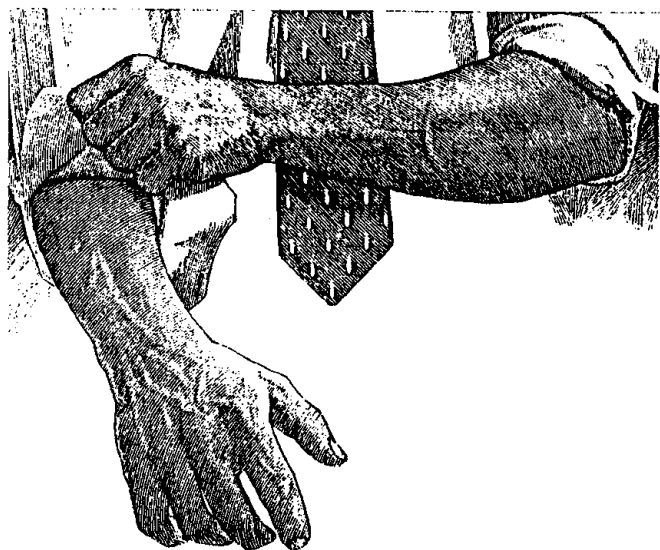
THE ALMIGHTY GOD, A GOD OF ORDER

THE GREAT GOD of eternity is a God of order. In Genesis chapter 1, verses 1 and 2, we read, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." This truth is expanded in Exodus 20:11, "For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is..." Here we learn that all of creation took place in six days; therefore, the first day heaven and earth were brought into being in the form of raw material, along with light. But God didn't leave things in this incomplete stage. Each successive day as He spoke and the Spirit of God moved, the finished product of God's creation for that particular day was accomplished. God brought order out of chaos. (In fact, the Greek word for world, *kosmos*, implies creation and order, meaning that which has been arranged). Yes, everything was set in order to serve the worthy purpose for which it had been created. Thus, God could say that it was "good" and "very good."

And from the spiritual perspective, God is likewise a God of definite and predetermined order. Man was created in the image of God, and being created in that image, his life was to be lived in the context of orderliness for the glory of God. But man sinned and has fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). From the fall of man until the coming of Christ the moving undercurrent pointed to redemption, restoration and order. That is what redemption is all about. The Lord came to save us from our sins, not in our sins (Matthew 1:21; Titus 2:11-14). A man right with God is a man living an orderly life, not one of dissipation (I Peter 4:1-5) and no purpose (Acts 11:26).

A study of the New Testament verifies everything that we have said. Most of the epistles of the New Testament were written to set churches in order in some way. The epistles of I and II Corinthians, along with Galatians, especially come to mind. The other epistles are not without this emphasis. The Corinthians are nominally called a "church of God" (I Corinthians 1:2), but sin had separated many of them from God and made that expression almost meaningless. Partyism, immorality, and the abuse of worship had disrupted the unity of the church. In the midst of this Paul instructed them, then says, "And the rest will I set in order when I come" (I Corinthians

THE BEST WAY to Get



Anything Done *IS TO DO IT.*

11:34). He further asserted, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (14:33). Even of the public assembly, he said, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (14:40). (Yes, God is a God of order). In the follow-up letter, II Corinthians, Paul is pleased that many of them have responded favorably to his efforts to set things in order. Read II Corinthians 7:8-11. The well-known words in 7:10, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation," are talking about nominal "Christians" repenting and being restored to the Lord (regaining their salvation), not alien sinners repenting. But still some had not repented and were holding out. Paul speaks of how he was going to have a showdown with them when he came, then prodded them, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates [do not stand the test]?" (13:5). The church and the lives of its members had to be set in order. Yes, part of the work of an evangelist is to set churches in order (I and II Timothy; Titus 1:5, etc.)

We mention these self-evident truths, which do not seem to be so self-evident any more, to call attention to the need of setting things in order in the church. Certainly this goes against the grain of thought in a religious world plagued with denominationalism, false teaching and worldliness. We are told it really doesn't make any difference what you believe just so long as you are sincere (However, notice II Thessalonians 2:10-12; I Timothy 4:16; II John 8-11). In this era of "worshipping" that which is big

and attaining mega-church status at any cost (except "counting the cost," Luke 14:26-33; I Corinthians 6:20), to get serious about setting the church in order would be disruptive to carnal ambitions. Unfinished work of so-called "Reformation" movements and "Restoration" movements as seen in denominational monuments are unpleasant reminders of failures of the past and shortcomings of the present. Yes, to even consider this is a disconcerting experience for the ecumenical mind saturated with unbelief. Ghosts from the past linger to haunt us. Traditions of men stand between us and the Word of God.

Regardless where you may find yourself religiously, we urge you to take seriously the things that are written here. There is more to following the Word of God than simply giving lip-service to this noble concept. There is more to being the church of the New Testament than simply making that claim. There is more to being the undenominational church of Christ than asserting such an unsubstantiated and presumptuous claim. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Much setting in order needs to be done. Remember the Lord said, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). And it was the Lord who also said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed" (John 8:31). Let's get serious about this. □



A Wise and Due Consideration of Our Latter End

A WISE and due consideration of our latter end, is neither to render us sad, melancholy, disconsolate, or unfit for the business and offices of life; but to make us more watchful, vigilant, industrious, sober, cheerful, and thankful to that God who hath been pleased thus to make us serviceable to Him, comfortable to ourselves, and profitable to others; and after all this, to take away the bitterness and sting of death, through Jesus Christ our Lord. □

—Sir Matthew Hale



Let Dissolution Come

LET DISSOLUTION come when it will, it can do the Christian no harm, for it will be but a passage out of a prison into a palace; out of a sea of trouble into a haven of rest; out of a crowd of enemies, to an innumerable company of true, loving, and faithful friends; out of shame, reproach, and contempt, into exceeding great and eternal glory.—John Bunyan □



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A Series Involving the Bible and Prophecy...

THE SUFFERING SERVANT

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“WHAT CAN WASH away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.” Sound familiar? Something you learned as a child? Or, one of the first things you learned about Jesus as a youth or an adult? Jesus’ blood sacrifice for sin is a basic truth at the heart of the Gospel.

Not Understood by Jesus’ Apostles

However, what is so basic and simple to many of us today was not understood at all by Jesus’ apostles. They simply did not understand the purpose of Jesus’ death. Not during His entire ministry. They thought His death was the end of their hopes.

“From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, ‘Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!’” (Matthew 16:21,22).

Peter had just before confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. Certainly Peter understood that “Christ” meant “King-Lord.” But he did not yet understand that it also meant “Priest-Savior.” He believed that it meant reigning in triumph, but he did not yet understand that it also meant suffering in disgrace.

Peter and the Jews in general had failed to capture the meaning of the Old Testament prophecies regarding the suffering Servant. They knew the prophecies were there. Perhaps they thought the servant referred to the nation of Israel as a whole. Or, perhaps it referred to some individual, but not to the Messiah. To them “Messiah” was King, the Son of David. If they thought of Messiah as Savior, it was with the idea of saving Israel in a physical sense.

Not until after Jesus died and arose from the dead, was He ready and able to open the minds of the apostles. “And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, and thus it was

necessary for the Christ (Messiah) to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day’” (Luke 24:45,46). It was *the Messiah* who had to suffer.

It was the Messiah who also had to rise from the dead. The resurrection is the key to understanding these two lines of prophecy. How could the Messiah be both the eternal King and the suffering Servant? Jesus’ followers thought that it was all over when Jesus died. However, the resurrection put everything into a new light. For Jesus to become the glorious King He first had to suffer.



“Why Have You Forsaken Me?”

Have you ever felt forsaken by God? Have you known the anguish? That’s what Psalm 22 is all about. This must be one of the prophecies Jesus was referring to in Luke 24. There are striking physical details prophesied in the Psalm. (Compare Psalm 22:18 with John 19:23,24.) However, the thrust of the Psalm seems to be mainly an insight into the *inner suffering* of Messiah.

Suspended between heaven and earth, Jesus cried out: “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Mark 15:34). These are the opening words of Psalms 22. They depict inexpressible agony. It would be hard to find words anywhere in Scripture that express more deeply what Jesus suffered on the cross.

It is often said that Jesus suffered more than any mere human. However, this is *not* true if we consider only His *physical* suffering. Crucifixion is very cruel. Nevertheless, in modern times and in

ages gone by, man has devised torture methods far worse than crucifixion. And, who would disagree that the prolonged unbearable pain of various terminal illnesses is far worse than one day of crucifixion?! The Bible itself acknowledges that fast death is better than slow death. "Those slain by the sword are better off than those who die of hunger" (Lamentations 4:9).

This is not meant to minimize the physical suffering of Jesus. It was real and it was awful. It was more than most of us will ever suffer in this life. His suffering, however, was not just of the body; it was also of the spirit. It is true that we mortals often suffer in the spirit, too; but are we capable of suffering in the spirit what *He* suffered?

Jesus was God in the flesh. "I and My Father are one" (John 10:30). Yet, in His darkest hour, the Son was forsaken by the Father. "My God, My God, why...?" Part of the answer, at least, is found in 2 Corinthians 5:21. "He (God) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin for us." Jesus was made sin; sin separates from God. It's too deep for our human minds to take it all in.

Verses 1 to 21 of Psalm 22 continue with an insight into the inner, spiritual suffering of our dear Savior. Many of the verses express the utter shame that the very Son of God suffered. Instead of being praised and glorified by the people, He was "a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All those who see Me laugh Me to scorn" (22:6,7). Many of us know what it means to be rejected by others; but we are mere human beings who are rejected by other human beings. *He* was (is) the eternal Word and Creator being rejected by His very own creation. How can we understand how that felt to Him?!

Throughout the Psalm, those who rejected Jesus are called bulls, lions, dogs and oxen. These "animals" fulfilled prophecy by using the very words of verse 8: "He trusted in Jehovah, let Him rescue Him" (see Matthew 27:43). Matthew adds their additional words, "for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'" This is just like Satan's temptations of Jesus in the wilderness: "If You are the Son of God..." (Luke 4:3,9). How many of us can bear a challenge to our authority, ability, or knowledge? We fight back; yet He answered not a word, nor did He use His power to come down off the cross. He bore the utter shame for you and for me. It was not the nails, but *love* which held Him to the cross.

The last ten verses of Psalm 22 have a very different theme. It is a theme seen briefly in various earlier verses. It is a message of victory, of God hearing the Messiah's cry, of God's help for the afflicted One. It is a call to praise, glorify, fear and worship the God of Heaven who answered the Mes-

siah's cry. Although these verses do not say so directly, they presuppose the resurrection of the Messiah. Jesus did not triumph by yanking himself off the cross. Rather, He triumphed by yielding to the cross so that He could be buried and then rise from the dead!

This victorious portion of the Psalm begins with the Messiah referring to us as "brethren" (22:22). The Hebrews writer quotes this verse and goes to great length to explain its meaning (Hebrews 2:10-18). To be able to call us "brethren," the Messiah had to become flesh and blood like us. He also had to suffer like us. He had to experience death as we do. All his suffering brought such tremendous results for us.

The Baptism of Suffering

The New Testament mentions five baptisms: two in water, and one each in fire, the Holy Spirit, and suffering. Jesus refers to the latter in reference to Himself in Mark 10:38. "Can you drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" What baptism is that? The form of the question indicates that He is talking about something difficult--certainly not Jesus' baptism in water. Jesus refers to both the baptism and the "cup". In Gethsemane, the "cup" clearly refers to His day of suffering in trial and on the cross (Mark 14:34-36). His baptism in Luke 12:50 must be the same as this cup. Two symbols to portray the same suffering. "But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!"

"Baptism" is an action word. The action is immersion, a complete overwhelming. Jesus was not sprinkled with suffering; He did not have a little suffering poured out on Him. From Gethsemane to Calvary, He was totally immersed and overwhelmed in suffering.

This baptism of suffering was prophesied in Psalm 69:1,2,14,15. "Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck...I have come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me...let me be delivered from those who hate me, and out of the deep waters. Let not the floodwater overflow me."

Like Psalm 22, Psalm 69 speaks of the enemies of our Lord. "Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head" (Psalm 69:4). This is just the first of several expressions portraying Jesus' adversaries, his false accusers.

Psalm 69 even prophesies that Mary, Jesus' mother, would give birth to other children and that these earthly brothers would not believe in Him. Verse 8 says, "I have become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my mother's children." Jesus'

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earthly brothers are named in Matthew 13:53-56. The fulfillment of the prophecy is found in John 7:5. "For even His brothers did not believe in Him."

Two New Testament texts quote the very next verse (69:9), saying that Jesus fulfilled it. The first half of the verse has reference to the cleansing of the temple, and that's how Jesus' disciples understood it (John 2:17). The second half, telling of the reproaches Jesus would suffer, is quoted in Romans 15:3 as being fulfilled by Jesus.

What an interesting but sad prophecy is found in 69:12: "I am the song of the drunkards." Have not many of us heard those songs? Those who have experience with "store-front" and other inner-city churches know that many men will darken a church door and talk of wanting to follow Jesus *only* when they are drunk. Like a man in New York City who would not talk about spiritual things when he was sober. But when he was drunk, he would phone a preacher in the middle of the night, wanting to hear a Psalm read.

Like Psalm 22, Psalm 69 tells of the inner suffering of the Savior. "Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness; I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none" (69:20). Not "none" in the absolute sense. There were a few at the foot of the cross who *did* take pity. But where were the thousands who had followed Him before? Of the twelve apostles, only John was near.

"Bruised for our Iniquities"

Isaiah 53 is one of the greatest of all Messianic prophecies. Psalms 22 and 69 give good prophetic insights into the suffering the Messiah would endure. However, they do not explain why He would suffer. Isaiah 53, on the other hand, prophesies both the *what* and the *why*.

God calls the Messiah "My Servant" in Isaiah 42:1-4, (quoted in Matthew 12:15-21). In Isaiah 53:11 God calls Him "My righteous Servant." Calling the Messiah "Servant" emphasizes His humility. It emphasizes His humanity. Jesus is the Son of God, most assuredly. Nevertheless, in the four Gospels, He is referred to as the "Son of Man" nearly 80 times. That is more than twice the times He is called the "Son of God."

The beautiful passage in Philippians 2:5ff says, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, **taking the form of a servant**, and coming in the likeness of men. And

being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."

One day, on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, an Ethiopian was in his chariot reading about this humble, suffering Servant. He was not reading the Philippian text; that had not yet been



penned. Rather, he was reading the words that Isaiah had written more than seven centuries earlier. The Ethiopian did not understand it. He needed to know the historical facts of fulfillment. So when Philip came to him, he "opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture (Isaiah 53), preached Jesus to him." (See Acts 8:26-40.)

Isaiah 53 is a perfect text from which to preach Jesus. It tells us that Jesus was not a Hollywood star as many artists depict Him. "He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him" (verse 2). He did not *look* divine. He had no halo. Neither did He wear clothes to set himself apart as He is so often depicted. If that had been the case, there would have been no need for Judas to identify Him with a kiss (Mark 14:43-46). Jesus looked just like an ordinary human being, a servant.

"He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief...He was oppressed and He was afflicted...It pleased Jehovah to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief" (Isaiah 53:3,7,10). All this agrees with Psalms 22 and 69 and with the many details of fulfillment seen in the Gospels. Our Lord suffered untold agony. He was spit upon. As a mock scepter, they put a reed in his hand. They put a crown of thorns on His head. They mocked Him for His claim to be king. Not to mention the beating and being nailed to the cross!

But Isaiah 53 goes further than the Psalms. Clearer than any other Old Testament text, Isaiah prophesies *why* the Servant would suffer. "He was wounded for our transgressions...Jehovah has laid on Him the iniquity of us all...For the transgressions of My people He was stricken...When you make His soul an offering for sin...My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities...He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:5,6,8, 10,11,12). Is any *New Testament* text plainer?! With these verses in mind, we can better appreciate 1 Corinthians 15:3: "that Christ died for our sins **according to the Scriptures**." Certainly Isaiah 53 is chief among those Scriptures.

The well-known Romans 3:23 says, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Isaiah 53:6 says the same thing, but more poetically. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and Jehovah has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." We are not like the stately lion. We are not like the versatile dog who can do so many things for his master. Rather, the Master must care for us. Like sheep we have gone astray; we have become lost. Thank God that the suffering Servant came into the world to seek and save the lost.

Jesus and Healing

Isaiah 53 is clear: we are all sinners, and that is why Jesus died. Some believe that Jesus also died for our physical sicknesses. They teach that sickness comes only from the Devil and that a person will not get sick if his life is right with God.

In one sense, there is no question that Jesus died for our sicknesses. He died to save us and take us to His eternal home. In the New Jerusalem "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain" (Revelation 21:4). Jesus' death and resurrection make the New Jerusalem possible. In that sense, He *did* die to take away our sicknesses.

But in life on this earth, all men (saved and unsaved) are subject to tears, sorrow, pain and death. That includes sickness. Timothy, for example, a great man of God, suffered frequent stomach upsets. The apostle Paul did not tell Timothy to repent and get his life right with God. Rather, he gave him a natural remedy (1 Timothy 5:23).

Isaiah 53 does, indeed, prophesy regarding physical sicknesses. However, the prophecy is not connected to Heaven, nor to the cross, nor to a plan of God for all His people here and now. Verse 4 says, "Surely He has borne our griefs (literally: sicknesses) and carried our sorrows (literally: pains)."

The Gospels are quite clear about the fulfillment of these words. They are connected to Jesus' healing ministry, *before* the cross. Matthew 8:16,17 reads: "And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, **that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet**, saying: 'He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.'" The wording is slightly different, as in different Bible versions today, but this can be no other than Isaiah 53:4. The fulfillment is not at the cross, but in Jesus healing ministry. The Bible tells us so.

Isaiah 53:5,6 is another story. Here it speaks of being wounded, bruised and receiving stripes. For what? For our transgressions and iniquities. "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and Jehovah has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

There is a question about the phrase "by His stripes we are healed." Healed in what sense? If we let the context speak to us, we find "transgressions" and "iniquities" mentioned just *before* "healed". Also, we find "gone astray," "turned, every one, to his own way" and "iniquity of us all" just *after* "healed". Does that not make the healing *spiritual*?

Peter refers to Isaiah 53:5,6, in 1 Peter 2:24,25. Again, notice the context in which "healed" is mentioned. "Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for **righteousness**--by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep **going astray**, but have now **returned** to the Shepherd and Overseer of your **souls**." It is all about sin and salvation of the soul. The only thing mentioned about the body is that Jesus bore our sins in His body.

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This is like Psalms 41:4. "Jehovah, be merciful to me; **heal my soul**, for I have sinned against You." Notice also Psalms 147:3: "He heals the **broken-hearted** and binds up their wounds (literally: sorrows)." Jeremiah 3:22 contains one more example. "Return, you backsliding children, and I will **heal your backslidings**."

God's Plan for Salvation Fulfilled

Jesus' death must not be seen as failure. He did not die as a martyr. His death did not unexpectedly interrupt a fruitful ministry. On the contrary, a study of prophecy has shown that the death of the Messiah was in the plan. Not only the death itself, but the *purpose* of that death.

It was all in God's plan since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 3:15, standing alone, does not have a clear meaning. One must take into account the rest of Old Testament prophecy and all the New Testament fulfillments. Then, Genesis 3:15 can be seen as the first reference to the death of the Messiah.

Actually, God had it all in the plan *before* the fall of man, even before the creation of the world. Revelation 13:8, referring to Jesus, speaks of "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Peter, on the day of Pentecost, charges the Jews with the guilt of slaying Jesus. Nevertheless, he clarifies that Jesus' deliverance to death came about "by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). Some days later, Peter says, "But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled" (Acts 3:18).

Jesus, himself, had foretold the reason. "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). Before Jesus began his ministry, John the Baptist clearly pointed to the central purpose of it all when he cried, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

All the evidence shows that it was God's eternal plan for His Son to die for our sins. Far from being a failure, Jesus acceptance of death on Calvary was in direct fulfillment of the prophecies, in direct obedience to God's eternal plan. Praise God that Jesus was willing to become the Suffering Servant! It was for your salvation and mine! □

"Life is a grindstone, and whether it grinds a man or polishes him up depends upon the stuff he's made of."

The Worst Kind of Traitors

FLATTERERS are the worst kind of traitors for they will strengthen thy imperfections, encourage thee in all evils, correct thee in nothing, but so shadow and paint thy vices and follies as thou shalt never, by their will, discern good from evil, or vice from virtue.—*Sir Walter Raleigh* □

BIBLE QUESTIONS

(Random Questions Over the Bible)

1. How old was the first man Adam when he died?
2. What man had a name that meant exalted father (later changed to a name meaning father of a great multitude) but was childless until he was about 100 years old as far as a promised son was concerned?
3. What man with a name meaning rascal (supplanter) had it changed to "prince of God"?
4. How many Canaanite nations did God cast out before Israel in the Promised Land (and what were their names)?
5. What two women in the book of Proverbs are pictured as standing on the street corner and calling to those who pass by?
6. What O.T. prophet had a scribe by the name of Baruch who wrote what the prophet said in a book?
7. What O.T. prophet asked the question, "Will a man rob God?" then answered by saying they had robbed God in withholding their tithes and offerings?
8. What are two occasions mentioned when angels ministered to Jesus?
9. What are two times it says that Jesus marvelled?
10. What two miracles of Jesus were of a destructive nature?
11. How many times is Nicodemus mentioned in the N.T. Scriptures (and in what connections)?
12. Where is the only record of Jesus ever writing anything found in the Bible?
13. What two books in the New Testament were written to a man by the name of Theophilus?
14. Under what circumstances was the apostle Paul first called "Paul" instead of "Saul" in the New Testament?
15. As far as the record goes, what was the only miracle wrought by an apostle that brought injury to the person of another?
16. What are the last spoken words of the apostle Peter in the New Testament?
17. What two men who lived before New Testament times are used as illustrations of justification by faith by the apostle Paul in the book of Romans?
18. In which epistles of Paul is the apostle Peter mentioned (and where)?
19. In one of the apostle Peter's epistles, what does he have to say about Paul's writings?
20. What N.T. writer (and in what epistle) repeatedly speaks of the certainty of things Christians can "know"?

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

READERS'

...Response

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. □

FLORIDA:

■ "I appreciate your work in the Lord. I subscribe to *THE SWORD AND STAFF* in English. I would be interested in the Spanish version...We have appreciated seeing your web page. It has given us some ideas we may like to borrow. Is this all right? ..." (e-mail)

SOUTH CAROLINA:

■ "Praise the Lord for *TRUE* Gospel preachers...You will have stars in your crown that you didn't know about with *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. We're praying for you—pray for us."

NORTH CAROLINA:

■ "...I like your home page and think you've done an excellent job in creating it, and I really like the link to *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. Thanks for the references that you offer, and I hope to be able to visit your site often..." (e-mail)

TENNESSEE:

■ "Please remove us from your mailing list as soon as possible—Thank You."

■ "I would like 3 copies of *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*. I enjoy *THE SWORD AND STAFF* as it stands for Bible Truth...Thank you for *THE SWORD AND STAFF* magazine."

■ "Thank you very much for *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I appreciate the articles so much that I keep the papers and read and study them again and again. They give me strength and courage..."

■ "I received a copy of Volume 35, 1997, Number 4 Wednesday...Yesterday afternoon and last night I carefully read the paper in its entirety and commend you for

its Scriptural content...This morning I spent nearly 2 hours looking at your web site, read several of your Editorials and Short Articles and printed 3 (*WARNING*, *"BE NOT DECEIVED"*, *UNITY*, *GOD'S KIND AND GOD'S WAY*; and *THE PROBLEM OF ACCEPTING WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT BAPTISM*). I also enjoyed, among other things, your article re *MOHAMMED'S NOCTURNAL TRIP* and *"CHRONICLES OF THE POPE"*...if all your material is as good as what I have read so far. It should appeal to any honest soul who can be convinced that the Bible is God's revelation to man for salvation..." (e-mail)

VIRGINIA:

■ "Please remove me from your mailing list."

■ "I have received copies of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* for years and enjoyed them very much. I save every issue and check back on them from time to time..."

■ "Please send me one copy of *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*. My husband and I enjoy getting and reading over and over your insights into and about God's Word. Keep up the good work."

■ "I would like to say I am impressed with your magazine *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I am so impressed with your magazine that I would like to have the 1987-88 and 1989-90 [bound volumes] and *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*...I am thankful that you are standing for the truth..."

KENTUCKY:

■ *Keep up the Good Work and May God Bless you.*"

PENNSYLVANIA:

■ "We've been using your questions from Acts on Wednesday nights [from the web page]. We are up to chapter 5 tonight. Thanks for preparing the questions." (e-mail)

OHIO:

■ "Thanks for continuing to preach the 'old Jerusalem Gospel' faithfully! So many are going the other direction..."

■ "A good friend of mine showed your paper—*THE SWORD AND STAFF*—to read. Would it be possible to be added to your mailing list?"

■ "You are doing a good work for Jesus. I do pray your health is doing much better. I pray that our God will give you many more years so you can keep on preaching and writing..."

■ "I sure have been goofing off in my help to you. Please forgive me. I read *THE SWORD AND STAFF* from cover to cover, and I appreciate it very much. Keep up the good work. God bless you."

INDIANA:

■ "After collecting several issues of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* from a congregation nearby, I thought I would send for the bound volumes as available. The congrega-

(Continued on Next Page)

READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

tion in my hometown does not receive THE SWORD AND STAFF any longer...I would appreciate very much to receive those bound issues that are marked, and maybe a list of any more that may be available."

■ "Thank you for sending me THE SWORD AND STAFF for many years. I have enjoyed this magazine very much and it's thought provoking messages. I am enclosing a gift and would like to receive a copy of POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS. May God continue to bless you."

IOWA:

■ "...Enclosed is a check...for bound volumes as checked on the enclosed list and 5 copies of your POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS...You are as a light in the world with the articles of Bible truth that THE SWORD AND STAFF continually writes. God bless you, and keep up the good work."

ARKANSAS:

■ "Enclosed is my check to help with the publishing of THE SWORD AND STAFF. I thank you for these publications and pray for you...May the Good Lord bless you always."

TEXAS:

■ "...I visited your site. I like it very much. I would like to receive a complimentary copy [of THE SWORD AND STAFF]..." (e-mail)

OKLAHOMA:

■ "We appreciate your work in THE SWORD AND STAFF."

NEBRASKA:

■ "We really appreciate THE SWORD AND STAFF. Thank you for all your hard work. I would like to order one copy of POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS."

■ "We do praise God for your ministry, eagerly awaiting each publication of God's glorious message. Though the same subject as heard somewhere previously, yours is new in approach and refreshingly inspiring. God's richest blessing on you and this printed ministry."

MINNESOTA:

■ "Please send a copy of POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS. I really enjoy the 'Barbs' and short quips you put throughout your publication. Very thought provoking. Some from your book may be used in the church bulletin or on our front signboard."

OREGON:

■ "Please keep THE SWORD AND STAFF coming as I enjoy it very much. I hope this small contribution will help. Bless you in His service."

MEXICO:

■ "God bless you. Have you a new ESPADA Y CAYADO? The last you sent is a big blessing to me and the brothers in the church. Thanks." (e-mail)

AUSTRALIA:

■ "Thank you for your testimony and the provision of Bible teaching and your own writing..." (e-mail)

■ "Received a copy of your magazine. Very good—better than I expected from what I had read on the www. Thank you. Good articles. Found the Moslem article fascinating. Some seem to have the idea that all religions will eventually unite (almost just like business is doing), but the more you learn about other "ways" the more you see how different "the other way" is!!

"Best wishes in your project. The area you live in seems great too! And I thought you were in Australia." (e-mail)

PHILIPPINES:

■ "I would like to greet you in the name of our Dear Lord Jesus Christ.

"First of all, I want to express my heartfelt thanks for sending me your magazines, THE SWORD AND STAFF. I received them all. Thank you very much for the said magazines. They really help me, especially in my daily activities. I really appreciate your magazines, because they address not only our spiritual needs but also man's social needs. It is indeed a joy having a copy of your magazines for your information. I've been a subscriber for so many years now, and from the beginning of my subscription until now...your articles have become part of my own value system. Thank you very much for sharing the knowledge that you have gained through the grace of our Lord and for your unselfish and courageous efforts in propagating His Holy Words. And I thank God especially for using you as his instrument.

"So, again, Sir, please continue to send me THE SWORD AND STAFF magazines. Keep up the good work of advancing the kingdom of God and helping the believers to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am praying for your ministry." □



"Be Filled With the Spirit"

(Continued from Page 1)

and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" When he says, "ye [you] are the temple of God," and "you" here, in the original language of the New Testament, these pronouns are plural. So, in some sense, the Holy Spirit indwells Christians, or the church, collectively as a group. Could this be what the Lord had in mind in Matthew 18:20 when he said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them?"

The Naos of the Holy Spirit

Individually (I Corinthians 6:19) and collectively (I Corinthians 3:16), as we have just noticed, reference is made to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as in a temple. This calls to mind the temple of the Old

Testament where God chose to put His name and to honor with His presence. In the New Testament there are two words translated temple, *hieron* and *naos*. The first word, *hieron*, is more generic referring to more than the temple itself, including the precincts of the temple mount, i.e., the outlying porches and buildings. The second word, *naos*, is more specific as it has reference to the temple proper wherein was the Holy of Holiness (and wherein God manifested Himself). In fact, the root from which this word comes signifies to dwell. *Naos* is the word fittingly and always used by Paul when he says that Christians are the “temple of the Holy Spirit.” We are the sacred dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. That is what it means.

Two Ways of Being Filled with the Spirit

The New Testament speaks of being filled with the Spirit in two ways. There was what we will call the charismatic filling (limited in its scope and duration, and not involving salvation) and the regular filling (universal in its promise and purpose, being part of salvation).

A classic example of the charismatic filling is found in Acts 2:1-4. Here, on the day of Pentecost, it says that “they were all *filled with the Holy Ghost* [Spirit], and began to speak with other tongues [languages], as the Spirit gave them utterance” (2:4). Getting us ready to understand what was about to happen in reference to Elymas the sorcerer (and how), Acts 13:9 reads, “Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) *filled with the Holy Ghost* [Spirit], set his eyes on him [Elymas the sorcerer]. (Elymas was stricken blind). The charismatic filling of the Spirit served its unique purpose in miracles being wrought, supernatural knowledge, and in divine inspiration. This filling of the Spirit is not promised, nor is it in evidence, in the church today (Hebrews 2:3,4; I Corinthians 13:8-13).

Paul had the regular and universal filling of the Spirit for all Christians in mind when he said in Ephesians 5:18, “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess [debauchery]; but *be filled with the Spirit*.” In this same book, Ephesians 3:16 and 17 reads, “That he [God] would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his *Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell* in your hearts by faith...” These verses are spoken generically to all Christians, and the admonition in 5:18 means to be progressively “filled with the Spirit.”

How We Are Initially Filled and Progressively Filled with the Holy Spirit

We are concerned about the universal filling of the Holy Spirit. This takes place initially, when we become a Christian, and progressively, as we remain a Christian.

Remission of Sin and the Promise

Obviously to have the indwelling of the *Holy Spirit*, sin must be gotten rid of. The Spirit will not come into a life filled with sin. In the second chapter of Acts we read of the New Testament church getting under way and sinners responding to the preaching of the gospel. Notice more in particular. “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:37-39). When we genuinely repent and are baptized, remission of sins takes place. The Holy Spirit as a gift is promised. Peter makes it plain that the obtaining of remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit in this way is universal. To restate this truth, he said, “For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” This includes everyone who will ever respond to the gospel message.

Sons of God and the Spirit

This is what the Lord called being “born again” (John 3:5; Galatians 3:26,27). We become children of God. Consequently Paul writes in Galatians 4:6, “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” This feeling that reaches out to God is prompted by the Holy Spirit within us because we are now God’s children. “Abba” is Aramaic, the native tongue of Israel at this time. In it we hear the very personal babbling of a baby. It is very much like a little one saying “Daddy.” It means the same as father, but is more personal and intimate in feeling.

Obedience and the Spirit

A significant Scripture is found in Acts 5:32. Here it speaks of the “Holy Ghost [Spirit], whom God hath given to them that *obey him*.” Certainly the initial obedience when one becomes a Christian, as in Acts 2:38, is involved. But more is implied. Faithful obedience to the Lord facilitates the ongoing and progressive filling of the Spirit. The Lord said in John 14:23, “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”

Indwelling Our Hearts By Faith

According to Paul in Galatians 3:14, we “receive the promise of the Spirit through faith,” and not by the works of the law. The “we” includes Jew and

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“Be Filled With the Spirit”

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Gentile. As already noticed, this faith is exercised initially when we repent and are baptized for the remission of sins whereby we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (In Acts 2:36 “know assuredly” signifies faith; this is followed by Acts 2:37-39). Then Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians was, “That he [God] would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his *Spirit* in the inner man; *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith...*” (Ephesians 3:16,17). Christ, or the Holy Spirit, dwells in our hearts according to our faith. The more we trust, the greater is the capacity for the indwelling and filling of the Spirit.

Perhaps here would be a good place to again mention Ephesians 5:18,19 along with Colossians 3:16. These two epistles were written at the same time, and many things in them are parallel in thought. In the Ephesians reference, Paul says to “*be filled with the Spirit*; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” In the parallel Colossians reference, he says, “*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly* in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” He speaks of the Spirit dwelling in them and the Word dwelling in them. These thoughts are very closely related. The Word produces faith (Romans 10:17), and then, as we have seen, by faith the Spirit dwells in our hearts. Thus, the presence of the Word makes possible the indwelling of the Spirit. Faith activates it. Likewise, the Word is the “sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:17). As such, not only is it used externally in spiritual warfare, it helps us sever sin from our lives so that the Holy Spirit can live within us.

The Filling Is Up to Us

Therefore, in view of all of these wonderful truths, whether an indwelling takes place and we are actually filled with the Spirit or not is up to us. The fact that we are admonished to “be filled with the Spirit” implies that we have some control over whether we will be filled or not. And a container must be open before it can be filled. Are we surrendered and open unto God?

The following Scriptures further indicate that the things we do have a bearing on the working of the Spirit in our lives.

- “For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that *soweth to the*

Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting” (Galatians 6:8).

- “This I say then, *Walk in the Spirit*, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16).
- “And *grieve not the holy Spirit* of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption” (Ephesians 4:30).
- “*Quench not the Spirit*” (I Thessalonians 5:19).
- We can “*Resist the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 7:51).
- We can “*tempt the Spirit*” (Acts 5:9).

Being Filled with the Spirit

Now with all of these amazing truths stored in our minds, and the potential that is there, let us ponder what will be in evidence and accompany being filled with the Spirit. Indeed if God dwells in us, our lives will be above the ordinary. We will be above the rat race and dog-eat-dog world. There will be noble and distinguishing characteristics and results in our lives. A Spirit-filled person will be spiritual. With the indwelling of God we can’t help but be like God, godly. Let us highlight these truths.

To Be Filled With The Spirit Is to Know Love

God is love (I John 4:8,16), and conversion to Christ is an experience of love. The apostle Peter, looking back to his reader’s induction into Christianity, said, “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (I Peter 1:22,23). Paul tells how a brother from the church at Colosse had visited him at Rome, telling about the Colossian Christians. He continued, “Who [the brother] also declared unto us your *love in the Spirit*” (Colossian 1:8). He further continued by admonishing them to be “knit together in love” (2:2). Paul places love first as the primary and crowning fruit of the Holy Spirit in Galatians 5:22,23. In a sense we can love without having the Holy Spirit, but we cannot have the Holy Spirit without loving, for God is love. Paul makes it plain in I Corinthians 13 that the charismatic filling and gifts of the Spirit, as evidenced in the early church, were inconsequential without love. These things were passing. And without love they were nothing. God is love, and, like God, love goes on forever.

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What Can Be More Foolish?

WHAT CAN BE more foolish than to think that all this rare fabric of heaven and earth could come by chance, when all the skill of art is not able to make an oyster? To see rare effects, and no cause; a motion, without a mover; a circle, without a center; a time, without an eternity; a second, without a first: these are things so against philosophy and natural reason, that he must be a beast in understanding who can believe in them. The thing formed, says that nothing formed it; and that which is made, is, while that which made is not! This folly is infinite.—*Jeremy Taylor* □



BARBS... with a Point

“GOD resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble” (James 4:6)—therefore, to be proud is to deprive ourselves of the grace of God.

Are you a stumbling block or a stepping stone?

Acknowledging that we are sinners without forsaking our sins only the more emphatically accents our condemnation.

Sound preaching must have more than sound to it.

When we are on “fire” for the Lord, we need to be careful that we do not experience “burn out” when so few respond to what we have to say.

“To err is human, to forgive, divine,” but to continue in sin is devilish.

When a person sits under strong preaching, and does not obey it, it makes him more set in the ways of error.

Salvation is not based upon feeling, but feeling should be based upon salvation.

Some Christians grow (just grow older) but don’t grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord (II Peter 3:18; 1:2-11).

It seems that many modern “pastors” are more interested in fleecing the sheep than in feeding them.

If we whisper repentance and shout forgiveness, there will be little change in a person’s life as he goes on living in his unforgiven sin.

Life, not properly lived, can become wearisome and burdensome.

God is concerned not only about how we give, that we are a cheerful and generous giver; but how that we receive, that it is with thanksgiving.

If we can’t figure out that people are lost, chances are we don’t know if we are saved or not either.

It seems that we must strip away the veneer of wealth, material things, gaudy garments, and cosmetics before the spiritual man can shine through.

If we have a “short fuse,” it would be wise to stay away from explosive situations.

When we have our appointment with the “grim reaper,” we will then reap that which we have sown, good or bad.

It is hard to be clothed with Christ when we are all wrapped up in the world.

A *sect* may also be a group of people who self-righteously think they are all of the Lord’s church when in reality they are only a *section*, if indeed that at times.

If you live without God, you will die without God (and without hope).

If something is the truth, no amount of wishing it were otherwise or believing something else will change the matter. □



Several Ways to Make Yourself Miserable

COUNT your troubles, name them one by one—at the breakfast table, if anybody will listen, or as soon as possible thereafter.

WORRY every day about something. Don’t let yourself get out of practice. It won’t add a cubit to your stature but it might burn a few calories.

PITY yourself. If you do enough of this, nobody else will have to do it for you.

DEVISE clever but decent ways to serve God and mammon. After all, a man’s gotta live.

MAKE it your business to find out what the Joneses are buying this year and where they’re going. Try to do them at least one better even if you have to take out another loan to do it.

STAY away from absolutes. It’s what’s right for you that matters. Be your own person and don’t allow yourself to get hung up on what others expect of you.

MAKE sure you get your rights. Never mind other people’s. You have your life to live, they have theirs.

DON’T fall into any compassion traps—the sort of situation where people can walk all over you. If you get too involved in other people’s troubles, you may neglect your own.

DON’T let Bible reading and prayer get in the way of what’s really relevant—things like TV and newspapers. Invisible things are eternal. You want to stick with the visible ones—they’re where it’s at now.

—from *KEEP A QUIET HEART* □



“Be Filled With the Spirit”

(Continued from Page 12)

To Be Filled With The Holy Spirit is to Be Holy

From ancient times, God said, “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (Leviticus 11:44; I Peter 1:16). To be filled with the Holy Spirit of necessity we would have to be holy, for it is the *Holy Spirit*. God is holy. The word “holy” means separate. Sinful flesh and the Spirit clash and are antagonistic one to another. The first part of Romans chapter 8 deals with this. Paul writes, “And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness” (Romans 8:10). Verse 13 reads, “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify [put to death] the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” Paul appeals to the concept of the body being the temple of the Holy Spirit to prompt people to live a holy life free from immorality (I Corinthians 6:18-20). The Holy Spirit is again appealed to in I Thessalonians 4:3-8 in living a life of sexual purity. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we will not have our lives cluttered and filled with the things of the world. We are to be separate. But this happens in reverse with those who don’t have the Holy Spirit. Jude wrote, “These be they who separate themselves [from us], sensual, *having not the Spirit*” (Jude, verse 19).

Being Filled With the Spirit Makes Us Speak Up for the Lord

The charismatic filling of the Holy Spirit and the regular filling perhaps overlap here. Both fillings point toward evangelism. Revelation 22:17 reads, “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” In carrying out the Great Commission, the Lord promised that he would be with his disciples always, even unto the end of the age (Matthew 28:18-20). His presence was (and is) there in the person of the Spirit. With the promise of the charismatic filling of the apostles, Jesus said, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost [Spirit] is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Acts 4:8 reads, “Then Peter, *filled with the Holy Ghost* [Spirit], said unto them...” And thus he preached to them. Acts 4:31 likewise reads, “And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all *filled with the Holy Ghost* [Spirit], and they spake the word of God with bold-

ness.” These men “filled with the Spirit” are said to have “filled Jerusalem” with their doctrine (Acts 5:28). The Spirit directed Philip to go, join himself to this chariot, and preach to the Ethiopian passenger (Acts 8:29), as well as directing Peter to the household of Cornelius (Acts 11:12). The record of Paul and Barnabas being sent out from the church in Antioch likewise has the Holy Spirit directly involved. “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, *the Holy Ghost said*, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away” (Acts 13:2-4). And thus the story continues throughout the book of Acts. Men filled with the Spirit couldn’t keep their mouths shut. There was work to be done. They had to share the good news.

A Song in Our Hearts That Comes Out

The Lord said “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Luke 6:45). The word “abundance” signifies a surplus and an overflowing. The heart is full and overflowing. It comes out. Paul also said in II Corinthians 4:13, “We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.”

Not only is this true in evangelism, but in another way. Paul admonished, “...*Be filled with the Spirit*; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:18,19). Being filled with the Spirit puts a song in our hearts, and it will come out.

Things That Accompany Being Filled With the Holy Spirit

The following Scriptures likewise are very interesting, revealing, and worthy of our meditation. There are many wonderful things that accompany being filled with the Holy Spirit when He truly is in our lives.

Illustrations in the Seven and Barnabas

- “Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost [Spirit] and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business...And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost [Spirit], and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch” (Acts 6:3,5).
- “For he [Barnabas] was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost [Spirit] and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord” (Acts 11:24).

(Continued Next Page, 2nd Column)

Spiritual Food for Thought

~By J. Andrew Gibbons~
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DIVINE UNDERSTANDING



PLEA FOR MERCY

A MOTHER sought the pardon of her son from the first Napoleon. The emperor said it was his second offense, and justice demanded his death. "I don't ask for justice," the mother responded, "I plead for mercy." "But," said the emperor, "he does not deserve mercy." "Sire," cried the mother, "it would not be mercy if he deserved it, and mercy is all I ask for." "Well, then," said the emperor, "I will have mercy." And her son was saved.—*Selected*

The above story really says a lot more than one would realize on the surface. If it weren't for God's longsuffering and mercy, we too would be condemned to die and there would be nothing we could do.

Romans 3:23, "For we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."

God would be just to execute justice, but thanks be to God for His mercy!

Romans 5:8-9, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him."

Titus 3:5, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit."

If we have truly received God's mercy, let us shine forth the praise of Him who called us by being merciful. There are two sides to this mercy, that which we receive from God and that which we show others. This is the diffusing of the fragrance of the knowledge of God, showing that He is truly merciful.

II Corinthians 2:14-16, "But thanks be to God who leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To the one we are the aroma of death to death, and to the other the aroma of life to life."

By showing mercy we are showing kindness or good will toward the miserable and afflicted, joined with the desire to help. If we have received, let us therefore show the mercy of God until Jesus returns.

Matthew 5:7, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." □

"Be Filled With the Spirit"

(Continued from Previous Page)

Other References

- "And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost [Spirit]" (Acts 13:52).
- "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost [Spirit]" (Romans 14:17).
- "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]" (Romans 15:13).
- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith [faithfulness], Meekness, temperance [self control]: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22,23).
- "For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth" (Ephesians 5:9).
- "And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]" (I Thess. 1:6).

This really is a fascinating study, and we have by no means covered the subject. Yes, when we become Christians the past is taken care of with the remission of our sins. But we do not become children of God to be left orphans. By means of the Holy Spirit God takes His abode in us. As we trust and submit ourselves to God, the Spirit indwells and empowers us to live the Christian life. We become more and more godly. He is there as an earnest to the grand finale that awaits us in eternity (II Corinthians 1:22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:13,14). We trust that this humble effort at studying this fascinating subject will prompt you to a deeper study and commitment to God. This will result in you indeed being "filled with the Spirit." Let this be realized in your life. □



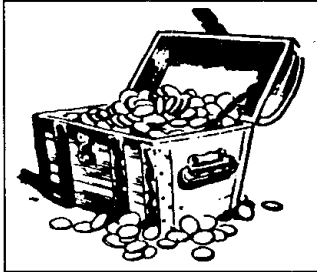
Answers to:

BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. Genesis 5:5; 2. Abraham—Genesis 17:1-5; 21:1-5; 3. Genesis 32:27,28; 4. Deuteronomy 7:1; 5. Wisdom—Proverbs 1:20-24; 8:1-5; The harlot—Proverbs 7:1-10; 9:13-18; 6. Jeremiah 36:4-8; 45:1; 7. Malachi 3:8-10; 8. Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 22:39-46; 9. Matthew 8:1-10; Mark 6:1-6; 10. Matthew 8:28-34 (Mark 5:1-17); Matthew 21:18-20; 11. Three times—John 3:1-21; John 7:50-52; John 19:39-42; 12. John 8:1-12; 13. Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1; 14. Acts 13:4-12; 15. Acts 13:6-11; 16. Acts 15:11; 17. Abraham and David—Romans 4; 18. I Corinthians 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5; Galatians 1:18; 2:7-14; 19. II Peter 3:15,16; 20. I John 2:3-6,11,13,14,18,20,21,29; 3:1,2,5,6,14-16,19,20,24; 4:2,6-8,13,16; 5:2,13-15,18-20. □

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O Precious Truth,
Thou art clear as the morning sky
And simple as a little child;
My weary spirit lingers nigh
To breathe thy freedom through a smile.

O Precious Truth,
On thee my soul desires to fill;
I thirst and hunger for thy word;
To taste the true my being thrills,
And it demands that thou be heard.

—By James E. Gibbons

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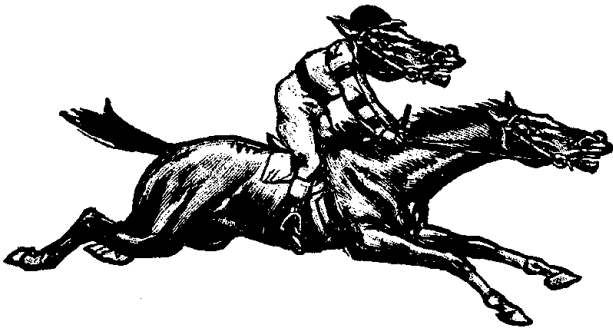
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