


SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1988

The Good News

OF THE WORLD TOMORROW

A Foretaste of
**TOMORROW'S
WORLD**



*'They shall not
hurt nor destroy
in all My holy
mountain'*

—Isaiah 11:9

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SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1988
VOL. XXXV, NO. 5
CIRCULATION: 1,000,000

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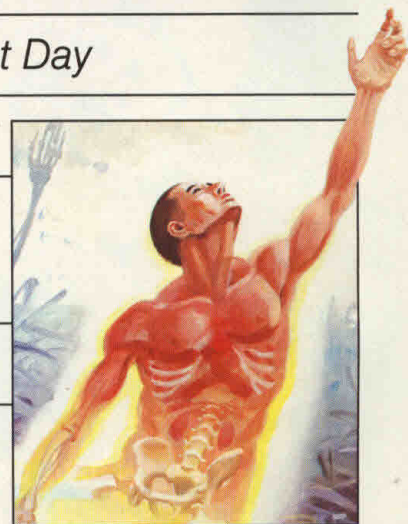
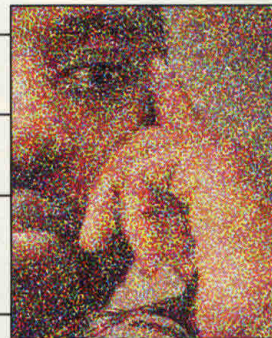
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COVER

Technical manipulation created this remarkable image—no such picture would otherwise be possible today! We combined separate Hal Finch photos, one of a lion and one of a lamb and child, to point to the sweeping changes in animal and human nature coming under God's government in the world tomorrow.

GOOD NEWS PERSONAL



Renew Your Commitment!

This exciting issue of *The Good News* devotes several articles to the Holy Day season that depicts the soon-to-come *intervention* in world affairs by God the Father. He will send Jesus Christ to stop humanity from the ultimate disaster of *total annihilation*—and to establish the wonderful world tomorrow, the Kingdom of God.

God commanded us to keep His Holy Days as a *reminder* to ensure that we never forget His great purpose for creating mankind, nor His marvelous plan of salvation.

This Holy Day season focuses our attention upon SPECTACULAR future events—the time described in Jeremiah 30:7 as “Jacob’s trouble.” Though it is described as the worst time of trouble in human history, it will be ended by the climactic battle of the Day of the Lord and the return of Jesus Christ to reestablish the perfect and just government of God over all nations!

How eager and excited our loving Father and our Elder Brother must be to initiate the enormous *changes* that will take place for the good of all mankind and for the *entire creation* (Romans 8:19)! Renovating and cleaning up all things—including

The Feast of Tabernacles depicts the soon-coming time when “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain” (Isaiah 11:6-9).



the nature and mind of humanity—will begin at that time. And God wants His saints to *share with Him* that joyous and glorious experience (Revelation 20:4-6).

The ways that have produced the anguish and suffering of mankind will no longer be allowed to develop and flourish. Real *happiness* will abound on

the earth! Humanity will learn true peace.

Streets, homes and cities will be *safe* for young and old alike. People will no longer have to live in daily *fear* of what calamity might befall them. Men and women of all races will be able to develop their *full* potential without injustice, prejudice or oppression hindering them.

These things ARE coming, and God has called all true Christians to take part in the process that will bring them about!

Therefore, these Holy Days serve as an *inspiration* and *encouragement* to all God’s people to grow ever more faithful to the wonderful calling as His firstfruits (James 1:18)—His *elect*, who will live and reign with Christ for a thousand years.

Every year, the Holy Days stir us to *renew our commitment* to become workable clay in the hands of the great Master Potter.

How God *yearns* to build His character and mind within us! How greatly He desires that we grow in oneness with Him, so that we might become a perfect part of His perfect government when Jesus returns!

Let’s keep firmly in mind Jesus’ words as recorded by Luke: “Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32).

Joseph W. Teach

Pastor General
Worldwide Church of God

LETTERS

"Till Death Do Us Part"

I have put off writing this letter for several days, since I have received the May-June issue and read the article "Till Death Do Us Part."

I don't mean to be selfish. I know this story could apply to a million other people. But still, I am one of them. Each and every word in that article is my personal thoughts and feelings exactly. It made me very sad and depressed and I had to stop reading several times because I would start to cry from being reminded once again as to what has happened and my feelings for it.

But then again it was a comfort knowing that this happens every day to somebody and it has finally happened to me. I will accept it as part of our life on this earth and will do the best I can with what I have left.

I am 69 years old. . . . We were married for 47 years and have a son and a daughter. My wife died one year ago . . . but it seems like yesterday. I can see and feel her presence just as plain this very minute as I could one year ago.

Frank Kearney
Peculiar, Mo.

Pentecost

Please convey my sincere thanks to Paul Kroll for his most interesting and meaningful article on Pentecost (May-June). His choice of words with biblical references was so explicit that one could not help but get a true picture of the true meaning of Pentecost.

Clark C. Cornell
Gahanna, Ohio

Divorce and remarriage

I am writing in response to the letter that appeared in the May-June *Good News*. I find what this lady wrote disturbing and misleading. I am a single

lady who has never been married and who is planning on marrying a man who is the victim (and I stress *victim*) of divorce. . . . What is so disturbing about the letter this lady wrote and about the attitudes of many people . . . is the heavy burden they lay upon those people who dearly love marriage, family, commitment—God's way—and who have had all of this torn away from them. . . .

My friend's reaction to the letter was one of inadequacy and guilt. But as I have been dating this man the biggest surprise is that many of our problems have come not from the fallout of his previous marriage but from the often negative and judgmental attitudes of friends.

As he has often commented, he feels "tainted"—and I suppose in a way he is in many people's minds. People often feel the need to warn us against repeating mistakes of the past or of being on the rebound. While this is good advice and we listen to it and discuss it together, ultimately we can only rely upon our faith in God to lead us and to bless our judgment.

Reader
California

The death of Christ

Thank you so much for the article "Jesus—Sentenced to Death for His Message!" (March-April). At first sight, I must admit that I answered the question "Would you be willing to die for that same message today?" with a no—but after finishing the article my answer became: Yes, I would! . . .

I always open your magazines with great interest, because I know, from reader experience for several years, that each number/issue contains new, valuable, educational news!

Henrik Blunck
Roskilde, Denmark

Positive child training

The March-April article referring to positive child training was very interesting to me. I was very excited to start using these tips on my 11-month-old son.

He is starting to have his own personality and is a bit spoiled. I am hoping that he outgrows that. He gives me a hard time to dress him and change his diaper. But I try to trick him by playing with his toes or tummy. Sometimes it works.

I try to comfort him by carrying him when he constantly asks for it. As a working mother, I come home to cook

and the baby insists on me carrying him. He tugs on my dress until I become a "softy" and give in to his demands.

Is that going to affect him in his future? Or is it OK to give the child the love and attention he is constantly asking for?

Lisa Q. Trevino
Houston, Tex.

The younger the child, the more time he or she requires from Mother. If at all possible, mothers of young children should not work outside the home. If you are financially obligated to work, you should carefully schedule all the time you can for your baby.

Give your child all the love and attention that you can, balanced with the firm, loving discipline he needs as well. If you haven't already, be sure to send for a free copy of our brochure The Plain Truth About Child Rearing.

Satisfied reader

Thanks very much for the last *Good News*. When it comes, everything else has to wait. Its articles are so informative, uplifting and educational, and serve to confirm my faith.

M.V.
Muehlacker, West Germany

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Dan Andreasen

Overcoming Isn't Easy!

When your inner reserves run low, they need to be replenished!

By Graemme J. Marshall

When it seems God doesn't hear your prayers—when you question whether you are called—when you wonder why it seems God isn't more active in your life—you are echoing the words of no less than King David, who cried:

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" (Psalm 22:1-2, King James Version).

And, "I sink in deep mire. . . My eyes fail while I wait for my God. . . For I am in trouble; hear me speedily" (Psalm 69:2-3, 17).

Why spiritual downs

To give out daily to others and at the same time keep your inner self under spiritual control demands a discipline that can leave your spiritual tank close to empty. You can become drained unless your inner reserves are renewed regularly.

Liken it to drawing water out of a tank without fresh supplies coming in to keep up the reservoir level. Like a dam in drought, as the water level sinks you see dead trees, stumps and debris that are usually well covered.

Similarly, when you get low spiritually, your unsightly attitudes are not so well covered. Spiritual reserves can be depleted by the constant demand to be enthusiastic, zealous, encouraging and sympathetic. You can feel empty.

To encourage others by radiating a high amount of Christian zeal, you have to continually make your own spiritual renewal a top priority.

Here are two keys that can help you become spiritually revitalized. You can renew your spiritual

relationship with God and with what God is doing through *solitude* and through *involvement*.

The need for solitude

Jesus often sought to be alone. His example teaches us to isolate ourselves from the things in man's world that choke God from our lives (Matthew 13:22).

Jesus surely was the most outstanding motivator ever! Yet the Bible does not picture Jesus as a back-slapping, 24-hour-a-day cheerleader. The Bible reveals Him as a person who often spent time alone to think, plan and pray.

The Bible records how on at least one occasion Jesus spent the whole night on a mountain in prayer (Luke 6:12). Other times He was out before sunrise (Mark 1:35).

Peter and the other disciples at times had to search for Jesus, saying, "Everyone is looking for You" (verse 37). Jesus

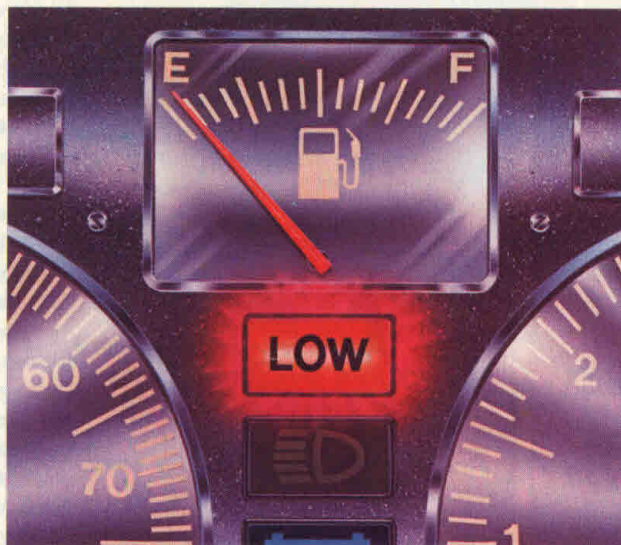
would separate Himself from the crowds to be alone with His Father.

But what would Christ have gained from solitary moments?

Privacy, for one thing. The chance to be away from people, noise and interruptions. At first light of sunrise He could observe the natural environment as it awakened—birds chirping and fluttering, for example. The awesome sight of sunrise with that extra chill just before dawn. In quiet stillness He could reflect, meditate and talk aloud to God without embarrassment or distraction.

Many people rise before dawn. But many only observe car exhaust, concrete, steel and glass. Some see only dead animals on roadways and perhaps tragic vehicle accidents.

Jesus knew the disciples needed renewal. The



Illustrations by Kim Passey

disciples at one point had been so busy, without even time for proper meals, that Jesus wisely made the decision, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest" (Mark 6:31). The disciples went off by boat to retreat for a while and pray, meditate and reflect.

Unfortunately, many of us live in crowded environments like that of Isaiah's prophetic description: "Woe to those who join house to house, who add field to field, till there is no place where they may dwell alone in the midst of the land!" (Isaiah 5:8). Many don't have access to solitude.

Of course, you can only do the best you can. *Time with God* is the priority—not whether you happen to be in more natural surroundings. If you cannot make a specific "getaway" per se, you still might be able to take an occasional walk amidst nature, perhaps on God's Sabbath.

At times in your Christian life you might need to seek a place of solitude for a spiritual fast—alone except for your Bible and a booklet or article concerning the purpose of your physical denial. Solitude frees you from the interruption of telephones, television and other distractions. It allows you to focus all your attention on beseeching God.

This occasional need to get away for a while is to restore your relationship with your Creator.

And—get involved

Ever wonder why you get so negative? Perhaps your daily preoccupation is oriented toward the negative.

Newspapers, radio and television, filled with the latest deaths, disasters and crime, are often the first thoughts that enter your mind each day. If your morning prayer is also preoccupied with the struggles of daily living and making ends meet, no wonder you end up in a negative state of mind before the day has even begun!

You have to actively disengage your mind from negative thoughts. Paul exhorted, "Whatever things are true . . . noble . . . just . . . pure . . . lovely . . . of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things" (Philippians 4:8).

Your mind has to be fixed on the positive. Test yourself. It is easy to be negative: Think about your weaknesses, things you have failed to achieve or what you dislike about yourself. As the list grows, so probably, does your depression!

Now think of the good points about yourself. You might find it takes effort to develop a list. If

you have trouble coming up with what is positive and hopeful, it might be that too much of your waking day is spent on dispiriting thoughts.

You have to work on what is positive. The negative, in this world of Satan's, takes no effort!

So get involved in thinking positively. In prayer, give thanks and be uplifting. And since not all people are positive influences, you may find you occasionally need to distance yourself from pessimistic situations. Read Proverbs 14:7, 22:24-25 and Psalm 26:4-5, 101:3-7.

Who are positive people? The opposite of those who tear you down, make you feel inferior or who weaken your beliefs in God and your commitment to God's Church. We all need people who calm, encourage and make us feel solid like a tree. Associate with people who hear you out without a lecture, confirm you in your faith, build you up and strengthen your true calling.

In an unproductive period in his life, David said, "I was mute with silence, I held my peace even from good" (Psalm 39:2). You need positive acts in your life to balance the downs. Strengthen your spiritual commitment by being involved with what God wants of you:

- If you are not praying regularly, get involved in talking to God.

- If you are dogged by bad habits, get involved in a program to solve them.

- If you are concerned about what is happening in the world, get involved in supporting the Work that is warning the world about where it is heading.

- If you are not refreshed from life's weekly struggle, get involved with better keeping

God's true day of rest, the Sabbath.

- If you are concerned about understanding the Bible more, get involved in the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course.

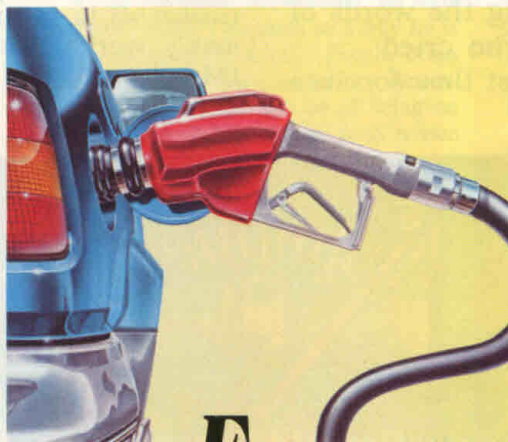
- If you are worried about your future, get involved in repenting and changing.

Be renewed

Everyone is discouraged occasionally from working on overcoming human nature and from dealing effectively with other people. When you find yourself in this situation, it is important to draw aside for a while to renew yourself in the most noble activity of all—striving to become like God.

Once renewed, then get busily involved with what God is doing through His Work on this earth.

And remember: To *give out* you must also *put in*. And you must take time to do it! □



Everyone is discouraged occasionally from overcoming human nature and from dealing effectively with other people. When you are, it is important to renew yourself in the most noble activity of all—striving to become like God.

Reflections of a Wayward Son

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you” (Exodus 20:12).

Is this commandment written to ensure the subjection of children to their parents? Certainly! But these words also reveal a far greater message, and highlight an important aspect of the nature of God.

By the time I was 8 years old I could mechanically recite all the commandments written in Exodus 20. As I reached my teenage years I understood every word of the commands and what actions would violate them.

I grew up in a close family of six other brothers and sisters. The only parent I have ever known was my mother. I remember her as a short, buxom woman, fiercely protective of her children and deeply interested in the Bible. Her decisions were made in the quiet hours in her room, where she pleaded with God in silent tears, eyes shut tight.

From as far back as I can remember, I would join her with my youngest brother and sister before bedtime and recite the Psalms, repeating after my mother's lead. Afterward we would each be given the chance

to ask God for blessings on other people.

I honored my mother as the law commanded, with respect and deep reverence. I could never raise my voice to her. I was careful of my words and, early in childhood, fearful of looking too long into her powerful stare. Before I performed any task I would consider what “Mamma” would think.

Unfortunately, my conscience did not extend beyond the confines of home.

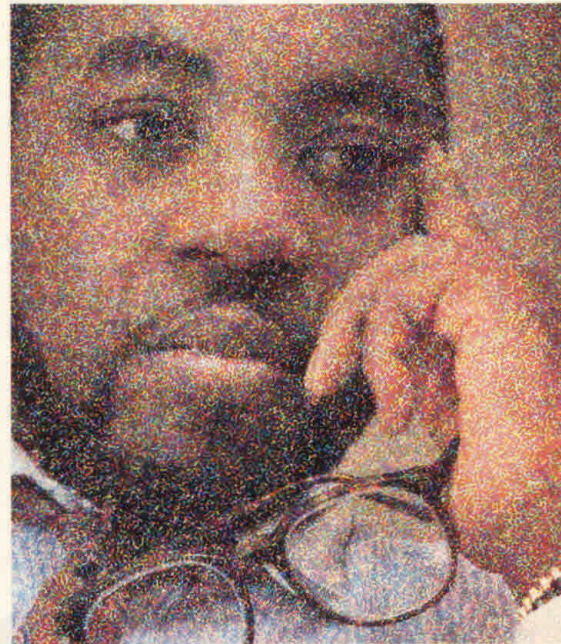
When I left home I became a different person. My conscience pricked a little when I performed questionable deeds, and sometimes I held back my hand or my tongue. But I firmly believed Mamma's concepts of right and wrong were old-fashioned and out of touch with reality.

“That's OK for her,” I would tell myself, “but this is a different situation—things are different now! God stopped working with people after Jesus Christ died—we're on our own!” Nothing could be further from the truth.

On my own

At 17 I was fed up living my life in the shadow of my mother's powerful influence. God was OK for her—it was clear He did answer her prayers and even brought the members of our family through tough times, but He

Hal Finch



*It is far too easy
to take for granted
the individuals
who have given you life.*

By Emmanuel Hill

seemed too weak to help the rest of the world.

My eyes had witnessed racial discrimination, family assaults, thefts and evil men who prospered well. I resolved that power belonged to the ruthless and the daring. My heart and mind filled with bitterness, anger and rigid determination. School seemed a senseless waste of time.

Bored and frustrated, I joined the United States armed forces.

I wrote home on occasion, sending money and pictures. I remember sending home a beautiful, illustrated Bible from basic training—and even then it was only because I felt she should put away the old, tattered Bible she had carried for years.

As always, the words *Honor your father and your mother* rang in my ears, and this was my way of paying honor. To any outside observer I was faithful in keeping the law. Life would teach me a greater lesson.

When I left the service I became socially active. I put to use the anger and determination that burned within me to help change the human condition. Concepts of family and marriage and responsibility were blurred in my quest for helping mankind.

From Louisiana farm villages to Virginia coal mines I saw the victims of pain and loss, listening to their stories and helping. Children who could foresee no future

and mothers struggling in smoke-filled welfare offices tore into me.

Only after throwing myself completely into the homeless situation in Los Angeles County did I come to the realization that man is unable to help himself of his own volition. There had to be some great power capable of straightening out the mess.

The road to repentance

For the first time in years I turned to the God of my mother. Like the young boy who knelt at my mother's bedside, I recited those childhood verses throughout the day. In those dark, tear-filled days I gave myself to study and trying to live by the instructions my mother had given me from the Bible.

It wasn't long before my quest for uncorrupted doctrine led me to a small group who actually lived by the Bible and offered free literature.

How vividly I remember those early days learning of the truth—discovering there was indeed a living, active God who had devised His own plan for solving the world's problems.

In time I began to write to my mother once more. I was like a wayward son finally returning home. Months passed and no response came.

One day a letter did return. In faded, stamped words a cold, emotionless hand pointed to the

return address. For hours I stared at those words as if they belonged to another world, perhaps someone else, but they never changed. The letter was stamped: "Return to sender. Deceased."

Those first few days I went on as if everything was normal. Gradually my prayers became interrupted by great heavings in my stomach. My eyes would fill up, and I would fall to the floor in defeat. My mother was no longer living.

In the months that followed, the words of God's command took on a new, deeper meaning. There was something I had neglected to do back when I had the chance. I never told my mother three simple words: "I love you."

A law of perfection

Centuries ago, King David declared, "The law of the Lord is perfect" (Psalm 19:7). And, "The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes" (verse 8).

Through tragic neglect, loss and finally repentance I have come to learn a lesson that will walk with me the rest of my days. The law is indeed perfect, enlightening the eyes, and, as Jesus Christ stated, "The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

Honoring my mother, I discovered, meant far more than fulfilling my responsibilities as a son—it included the silent, unwritten portion of the law that the words encompass: It also includes *loving* my mother.

If your parents are still living, take advantage of the opportunities you now have to develop a meaningful relationship. Be creative and make time for your parents. Share with them your feelings and intentions, and most of all, *tell them you love them!* No matter how great the distance or how strained the present situation may be, give them your love—and mean it.

If you have lost your parents, give them the honor and respect of a loving son or daughter by making a success of your life. □

Honoring my mother, I discovered, meant far more than fulfilling my responsibilities as a son—it included the silent, unwritten portion of the law that the words encompass: It also includes loving my mother.

What Most Christians Overlook...

Where Did the Holy Days Come From?

By Ronald D. Kelly

Ask almost any professing Christian about the Passover, Days of Unleavened Bread or the Feast of Tabernacles, and chances are he or she will say, "Oh, those are Jewish holidays."

But are they? Are they just for the Jews?

Since Jesus and the early New Testament Church observed them, should Christians observe them today? How did they come to be in the first place?

The beginning of a nation

Almost everyone who reads the Bible knows that God told faithful Abraham that he would father a great nation (Genesis 12:1-2). Some 200 years after, the descendants of Abraham numbered about 75. Drought forced them to move to Egypt. By that time, the clan had taken on the title of the aging patriarch Jacob, whose name God had changed to Israel. They would be known as Israelites.

After nearly a hundred years in Egypt, they were forced into slavery. Yet in spite of all the

hardships the Egyptians imposed, the population of Israel multiplied to more than three million. For more than a century they suffered under the Egyptians.

But God had not forgotten them. He prepared Moses to lead His people to the promised land.

Centuries later, when one of God's servants rehearsed this story in New Testament times, he called the people of Israel God's "church." Notice it in Acts 7:38: "This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness" (King James Version).

Here, the Greek word for "church" is *ekklesia*. It means called-out ones. God indeed was calling out His people. Old Testament Israel was His Church.

Called out for the Holy Days

The Exodus story is well-known. But have you ever noticed, when God sent Moses to Pharaoh the first time, it was for permission to keep a feast?

"Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord God of Israel: "Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness"' (Exodus 5:1).

Of course Pharaoh did not let

the Israelites go. So God performed a series of miracles that finally resulted in the Egyptians thrusting the Israelites out of the country.

In Exodus 12, God instructed Moses to have all Israel prepare for the departure. He was going to slay all the firstborn of Egypt. But if the Israelites would sprinkle the door posts of their dwellings with the blood of a lamb, the death angel would pass over them. The Israelites did this. God then began to lead them to the promised land.

To be kept forever

So they would never forget this momentous day in history, God said: "This day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance" (Exodus 12:14).

This was not given as a feast to the Jews only. It was for all Israel—for all of God's people. Judah was just one tribe out of 12. And did you notice? God said this day should be observed as an *everlasting* ordinance.

Because Israel had to leave Egypt at a moment's notice, God instructed them not to even take time to leaven their bread—that for the next seven days they should eat unleavened bread.

The Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread were to become the first two of an annual set of festivals the nation of Israel should observe.

Several weeks later, when Israel had camped near Mount Sinai, God called Moses to the mountaintop where He gave the tablets of the sacred law, the Ten Commandments. God's covenant with Israel, the basis of which is God's law, was ratified on what later came to be called Pentecost.

In the autumn of the year, God gave His people the harvest-season festivals, the Day of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles.

There were three festival seasons that included seven High Day Sabbaths called Holy Days. They were to be observed much

as the weekly Sabbath. They were days of rest and worship.

The Holy Days were to also be festive family occasions, with family dinners and fellowship.

In other words, the Sabbath and Holy Days were to be the heart and core of the Old Testament Church of God.

Inheriting the promised land

After 40 years in the wilderness, God chose Joshua to lead the Israelites into the promised land.

They crossed the Jordan River and set up their first camp. Let's again read the biblical account: "So the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jerico. And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread" (Joshua 5:10-11).

God led His people out of Egypt, establishing them as His own nation, during the first Holy Day season ever observed. Forty years later, they entered the holy land during that same spring Holy Day season.

Years passed. Israel struggled through many ups and downs. For 400 years they were ruled by judges. But they wanted a king. So God allowed them to have a monarchy. First Saul, then David, then Solomon ruled over Israel. After Solomon, the kingdom was divided into two separate nations—Israel in the north, Judah in the south.

Throughout many of these centuries, the Israelites did not diligently apply God's laws. They brought in pagan idols from surrounding nations. They lost sight of the Sabbath and Holy Days.

God sent His prophets, one after another, to warn Israel and Judah that unless they returned to God, they would suffer war, famine and captivity.

Few listened.

By 721 B.C., the northern 10 tribes of Israel were defeated by the Assyrians. They had given up the Holy Days of God. They had not properly kept the Sabbath for more than 200 years. They

plunged into paganism. Even in the captivity they did not repent and turn to God. And they never returned to the holy land. In history they became known as "the lost 10 tribes."

However, they were not really "lost." Over many centuries they migrated to northwestern Europe, then later to England, the Americas, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and to other parts of the globe.

Meanwhile, in the Middle East, Judah followed the pagan ways of her northern sister. But

When God's people did turn to Him, it was through the Holy Day seasons that they repented from sin and learned.

from time to time, a zealous king came to the throne who led Judah in religious reform.

A time of reform

One such king was Josiah, who ruled Judah about 100 years after the northern nation of Israel fell to the Assyrians. He set out to do what was right in the sight of God. The beautiful Temple had fallen into disrepair, so Josiah commissioned a renovation.

During the reconstruction, the builders found the long-forgotten book of the law.

Josiah was moved to repentance. He ordered the Scriptures read to the people. And he led Judah back to God's laws. But

have you ever noticed when and how this occurred? Notice the first act of repentance in II Kings 23:21: "Then the king commanded all the people, saying, 'Keep the Passover to the Lord your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant.'"

And the next verse is even more shocking: "Surely such a Passover had never been held since the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah."

When God's people did turn to Him, it was through the Holy Day seasons that they repented from sin and learned.

However, the reform was short-lived. After Josiah, Judah drifted away from God's Holy Days again. So beginning in 604 B.C., God allowed the Babylonians to defeat and carry away Judah into captivity.

The return to the Holy Land

Nearly a century later, after the Persians defeated Babylon, the Jews were permitted to return to their homeland. Under Zerubbabel and Joshua, then Ezra and Nehemiah, the Jewish nation was reconstructed with the Sabbath and Holy Days as the center of worship.

The Jews were the only people keeping those days. And that is why so many today think they are Jewish holidays. But from the time they were first given by God, they were given to His nation—His Church—to be observed as sacred festivals to worship Him.

The time of Christ

By the time Jesus of Nazareth came to establish the New Testament Church, the Holy Day festivals were an integral part of Jewish life. And the Holy Days were to play a very important role in the life of Jesus.

When He was about to enter His teen years we read: "His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the

feast" (Luke 2:41-42). It was at this time, we find, Jesus understood who He was, the Son of God, and that He had a work yet ahead of Him (verse 49).

And it was on the Passover in A.D. 31 that Jesus, our Savior, died for the sins of the world. In fact, the Passover lamb that had been offered throughout the centuries was a type of the sacrifice Jesus Christ made for all mankind. His blood was shed for the forgiveness of sins. Before He died, Jesus told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem till He sent the

holy spirit from God to imbue them with God's mind, character and power.

Establishing the New Testament Church

Jesus had told Peter and the apostles, "I will build My church" (Matthew 16:18).

Remember, Old Testament Israel had been God's Church since He called them out of Egypt. All that remained in the holy land of the original 12 tribes was the southern union of Judah. But when Jesus came to establish His

just as the Old Testament Church was founded on a Holy Day, so would be the New. Read it in Acts 2:1: "Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place."

Only 120 families really had comprehended what Jesus' message was. They had followed His instructions. They waited in Jerusalem.

On the Holy Day of Pentecost, as those faithful gathered to worship God, the holy spirit imbued them with the power and love of

Daytona Beach, Fla. (Glen Prokesch)



Pasadena, Calif. (Robert Taylor)



Victoria, B.C. (June Quinn)

New Testament Church, it was not to be a physical nation. The Gospel He brought was to be preached in all the world. Out of all nations and peoples, God would call a few humans into His Church for special purposes. But

God to carry out the great Work to which they had been called.

So are the Holy Days Jewish? By no means. Are they just for Old Testament times? No!

Prophesied for the future

Bible prophecy reveals one of the first orders of business after Christ returns to establish God's government on earth will be a return to the Holy Days.

Notice it in Zechariah 14:16: "And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles."

How important will it be? "And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, on them there will be no rain... This shall be the punishment of... all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles" (verses 17-19).

Sounds pretty important to God, doesn't it? It is!

Shouldn't we observe those Holy Days today?

We indeed should.

We do.

Shouldn't you?

For more information on the Holy Days, write for our free booklet *Pagan Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?* □

Strengthen Your Life

Our trip to the Feast points to a far greater journey we have all embarked upon.

By K. Neil Earle

The Feast of Tabernacles—that great Fall Festival designed to remind us of our calling as “strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Hebrews 11:13)—is almost here!

True Christians are spiritual pilgrims, mere sojourners in a world of confusion, a world that looks more and more like a desolate, dangerous wilderness (Deuteronomy 8:15).

We need the Feast more with each passing year. God’s Holy Days are refreshing oases full of the spiritual sustenance we all thirst for, especially as stressful end-time events batter us.

Yes, our individual and collective journey to the Feast can teach us vital lessons we need to learn as spiritual pilgrims on life’s rutty road.

Thousands of years ago, Feastgoers traveling to their designated Feast site at Jerusalem sang stirring “praise songs” that helped rivet their minds on the many truths proclaimed at the Feast of Tabernacles. These “pilgrim psalms,” as they have been nicknamed, are found in Psalms 120 to 134.

Songs for the open road

Isaiah 30:29 describes happy caravans of Feastgoers winding

their way to Jerusalem with songs and music. As a boy, Jesus Christ Himself experienced those idyllic family outings on the road to the feasts (Luke 2:41-45).

We today keep these same festivals just as Christ commanded (Matthew 28:20). But we in the New Testament Church are also *spiritual* pilgrims (I Peter 2:11), heading toward a New Jerusalem yet to be set up on this earth (Revelation 21:2).

Rich insights are stored up in these tender and melancholy but candid and faith-building songs. Their dominant note is one of trust and confidence in God no matter what the circumstances.

Expect surprises!

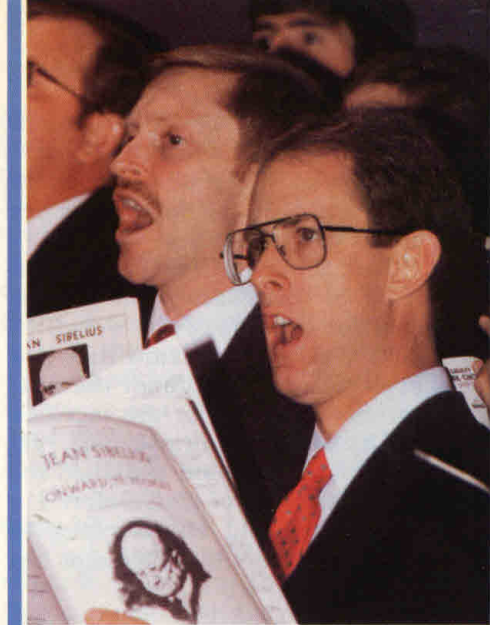
You’ll see why many people down through the ages have drawn hope and comfort from these “pilgrim psalms.” They include some of the most powerful, compelling passages in Scripture.

The “pilgrim psalms”

Notice the first pilgrim psalm, Psalm 120.

The last word in the Psalm harmonizes with the theme and tone of the opening Fall Festival, the Day of Trumpets (Leviticus 23:24). That word is *war*.

Trumpets have always been associated with warfare. And at the dramatic return of Jesus Christ to this earth as King of kings, the nations will be “angry” (Revelation 11:18), goaded into arming



Vail, Colo. (Robert Schimmel)



Perth, Australia (R.V. Ozols)

themselves to their nuclear teeth by a demonic false prophet (Revelation 16:13-14).

Today’s spiritual pilgrims can discern these hectic, chaotic events shaping up right now in world news. The first of the pilgrim psalms perfectly catches this mood of tension and alarm: “In my distress I cried to the Lord, and He heard me. Deliver



Spokane, Wash. (Daniel Deininger)



Vail, Colo. (Robert Schimmel)



Villa Gesell, Argentina (Greg S. Smith)



my soul, O Lord, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue" (Psalm 120:1-3).

Sound up to date?

Millions of people today live in unparalleled anxiety because we know that the peace treaties and pacts of men are mere pieces of paper. There is no real peace despite the best intentions of men (verse 7).

God's people experience this truth on the personal level as well. Just going to the Feast will mean persecution for some, on the job and at home. These travelers can relate well to Psalm 120:7: "I am for peace [attending the Festival that celebrates world peace in advance]; but when I speak, they are for war."

Did you know Psalm 120 ties in well with the Jewish calendar? The Day of Trumpets falls on the first day of the Jewish month Tishri, and, just as there are 14 more pilgrim psalms, 14 more days will take us to Tishri 15, the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:34).

Psalm 121 offers more rock-hard realism. "I will lift up my eyes to the hills—from whence comes my help?" (verse 1). The next six verses shout out the answer in an emotional explosion of dynamic faith and trust: "My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. He will not allow your foot to be moved [that means protection on your journey for you and your loved ones; the phrase "going out and . . . coming in" in verse 8 refers to travel]" (verses 2-3).

"The sun shall not strike you

Koroivu, Fiji (Norman Smith)



by day, nor the moon by night” (verse 6). Beautiful poetry? Yes, but poetry written by someone who has faced reality squarely.

In the Middle East, the merciless sun could dehydrate travelers quickly. And the moon (*luna*, in Latin) is still associated with mental and emotional upset—hence our words *lunatic* and *moonstruck*. Yes, when the world and its pressures seem to be scorching us to a frazzle, when formidable fears and anxieties tower in front of us on the way to the Feast or at any time in our lives, why not claim these marvelous promises of God’s physical and emotional comfort?

Psalm 122:1 describes a pilgrim gripped by the Feast spirit of rejoicing: “I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go into the house of the Lord.’” This is a converted attitude saying: “I can hardly wait to go to the Feast, to meet with God’s people, to hear His ministers explaining the big questions in life. I need to have the future clarified for me again. Oh, how I need this feast!”

Verses 6 to 9 record the pilgrim praying for a peaceful Festival for all of God’s people, for we all meet opposition and resistance. This is explained again in

Psalm 123. But Psalm 124 shows the pilgrim bouncing back: “‘If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,’ let Israel now say—‘If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they would have swallowed us alive’” (verses 1-3).

Reflecting upon God’s dramatic interventions for His people is a sure-fire way to trigger joy and elation: “Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved” (Psalm 125:1). Trust and confidence turn into laughter and joy in Psalm 126:1-2.

“Feast fever” is definitely catching by now.

We are one family

In ancient times, the Feast of Tabernacles was a supreme family activity (Deuteronomy 16:13-14). It still is. Now, as then, spe-

cial provision is made to ensure that the underprivileged have a joyous Feast, also. The tithing system still in force enshrines, in a practical way, the Feast themes of unity, charity, family.

This is why God inspired Psalms 127 and 128 to be in this section of Scripture. These are two of the most satisfying portraits of family life ever penned. The Feast is for children, too!

Psalm 128:5-6 could well be rephrased as a modern pilgrim’s prayers for his offspring: “May you grow up in the wonderful world tomorrow—a world at peace.” The olive plant, the symbol of peace, is mentioned in Psalm 128:3 because it requires a long, long period of tranquility to reach maturity.

Next comes Psalm 129, the 10th in the series.

This takes us to the 10th day of Tishri, the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:27). Psalm 129’s key word, *affliction*, harmonizes well with the sober lesson of Atonement, the only day God’s people are commanded to abstain from food and water. Fasting forcibly drives home a pertinent point to all true pilgrims: We always need God!

Yes, even as the most intensely joyful eight-day period in the year looms ahead, Atonement is a

Vail, Colo. (Dennis E. Benson)



Lihou, Hawaii (Hal Finch)



Ahungalla, Sri Lanka (David Baker)



Penticton, B.C. (Craig Clark)



Villa Gesell, Argentina (Tom Williams)



steadying reminder of the dark hours just before the glorious Millennium will dawn (Matthew 24:21-22). God Himself must shepherd us through these worrisome times ahead (Revelation 7:17), when the world will be violently shaken. Hence the intensely personal tone of Psalms 130 and 131. These masterpieces of confession and humility describe the frame of mind that will prevent us from suffering a spiritual slump during the busy, action-packed days of the Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:34).

Psalm 132 is a hymn to Jerusalem and its past and future as the Messiah's headquarters on earth (Matthew 5:34-35). By now, for Old Testament pilgrims, the city of Jerusalem was probably only a day away from the caravan. Psalm 132:14 makes today's pilgrims think of one thing—the coming 1,000 years of peace under the reign of Jesus Christ (Revelation 20:6).

No wonder Psalm 133 sizzles with euphoria. For the pilgrims of ancient Israel it mirrored the excitement of seeing old friends and family members again in the nation's capital. On these festival days the city buzzed with enthusiasm. For God's Church, a spiritual family, there is an even greater dimension to our rejoicing. Our Elder Brother, Jesus Christ Himself, walks in the midst of our assemblies, blessing, guiding, directing (John 14:23).

Psalm 134:1 describes the

opening night service of the Feast of Tabernacles: "Bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who by night stand in the house of the Lord!" The beautiful full moon that crowned Jerusalem on that night inspired prophets to write of the light and truth that would radiate out from God's headquarters tabernacle after the Messiah had appeared (Zechariah 14:6-7).

Psalm 135 describes the next day's service, the keynote assembly for the whole eight days. Now, as then, hymns are sung (verse 3). Inspired ministers explain the transcendent meaning of God's great Holy Day plan (verse 20). Pilgrims are reminded of their glorious calling (verse 4), exhorted to stay faithful through the trials and afflictions of this brief physical life in a spiritual wilderness (verse 14).

Are you ready?

Every Feast of Tabernacles is an "out of this world" experi-

ence. The sermons drive home a lesson we all need to ensure we will be there to help Christ usher in the Millennium: the need to fear God (Deuteronomy 14:23).

The pilgrim knows it is all worth it now. Safe inside the fold of God's called-out ones, there is strength and shelter. The Festival is a hands-on experience designed to teach the benefits of obeying God, to help us focus on the great goal ahead. For "where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18, King James Version).

This year God's people at more than 90 locations around the world will walk in the footsteps of these festival pilgrims of old. Perhaps some of us, growing a little weary on the strait and narrow way, need the Feast more than ever in 1988. Perhaps those letting the world get to them can find the lift, the inspiration they need at this year's Feast.

Make sure you're there. These psalms can give you renewed strength and determination to make this your best Feast ever.

Brethren and fellow-pilgrims, are you ready?

Then let's go. Let's strengthen our lives at the 1988 Feast of Tabernacles! □

Saratoga Springs, N.Y. (Dennis Turner)



Brno, Czechoslovakia (Christel Wilson)



Baguio, Philippines (Greg S. Smith)



Vail, Colo. (Robert Schimmel)



SIN

It Isn't All Your Fault!

By John Halford

Mesha watched the goat trot off into the wilderness without looking back. He was relieved. His instructions were to make sure that the goat did not return.

Better wait just a little longer, he thought. This was one job that had to be done properly. The priests would not be pleased if the goat followed him back to the camp.

Mesha sat on a rock and thought back over the events of the last few hours. He'd woken early to find the camp unusually quiet. There was none of the hustle and bustle of people preparing for the day.

Mesha had gone early to the Tabernacle to prepare for his responsibility. He'd been surprised to be selected, but the priests had assured him he was qualified. He was an honest man and was well respected in the congregation of Israel.

Mesha had watched the day's activities with great interest. He knew the rituals of the Day of Atonement were full of meaning, and he felt honored to be directly involved, even in a small way.

As the people began to assemble around the Tabernacle, they were subdued. It was partly because they were fasting, but also because they were moved by the solemnity of the occasion.

Aaron, the high priest, had laid aside his usual magnificent ceremonial robe and put on simple white clothing. A bullock and two goats were brought to him. Aaron had sacrificed the bullock and then entered alone into the Tabernacle.

As the high priest performed the rituals of the annual cleansing of the sanctuary, the holiest place of all, the congregation waited quietly. Finally, Aaron emerged into the bright sunlight and stood at the door of the tent.

Then the two goats were brought to him. He had cast lots

over them. "This one," he announced solemnly, pointing to one of the goats, "is for the Lord. And this one"—his voice trembled with emotion—"this one is for Azazel."

Mesha had shuddered at the sound of the terrible name. Azazel—the evil spirit being—adversary of God and enemy of the people of Israel.

The goat chosen for the Lord was quickly sacrificed, and Aaron, taking a bowl of its blood, went back into the Tabernacle. After some time, he came out, and Mesha was ushered forward, with the goat chosen for Azazel. A rope had been fastened around its neck.

When Aaron laid his hands on the goat's head, it tried to shake him off, but a priest moved forward and held it steady. Aaron then prayed earnestly, confessing the sins of his people—their weakness, their lack of faith, their constant wavering in spite of the miracles they had seen. When he had finished his fervent prayer, he looked at Mesha and said quietly, "Do as we have told you."

Mesha had led the goat out of the Tabernacle and through the watching congregation of Israel. He took it out beyond the tents, until he was well away from the camp. Then, when he was sure he was deep into the wilderness, he slipped the rope from the



goat's neck and pushed it away. "Go," he said, "and don't come back."

The goat hesitated for a moment and then trotted away into the desert.

The Tabernacle is long gone now, but this ceremony, described in such careful detail in the 16th chapter of Leviticus, remains full of meaning. The ceremony of the Azazel goat is one of the most positive, encouraging and reassuring lessons of the Bible.

Each one of the annual Holy Days of the Bible represents a stage in the plan of salvation. God has set Himself to save the human race, and He *is doing it*—systematically and carefully.

The Day of Atonement, the fifth of the Holy Days, focuses our attention on the vitally important moment when God's archenemy, Satan, is banished. Satan will no longer be able to tempt humans and deceive them about their true potential.

The influence of Satan

You may have heard someone use the expression, "The devil made me do it." It is usually meant as a joke. People use it to lightly brush aside mistakes and problems that have caused some minor embarrassment.

It's a shame that expression is taken so lightly! The devil may

not *make* you do things, but he does make it easier for you to sin.

A sincere Christian hates to sin. His whole life is spent trying to overcome sin. When Christians sin, they feel guilty, embarrassed, ashamed and cut off from God. Thankfully, we can repent and ask that our sins be forgiven through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. And, of course, they are. God says they are removed "as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12).

But then we sin again, and again, and *again*. After a while, we ask ourselves if God still believes we are sincere. Certainly Christ's sacrifice was great enough to cover all sin, but if we go on making the same mistakes, shouldn't God doubt if we really intend to overcome? If someone continued to offend you day after day, week after week, month after month, would you take the person seriously?

What we often fail to recognize is the role of Satan in our sins. The Bible tells us that he is a deceiver. Because Satan is such a master of deception we often do not realize how he does what he does. He likes to stay in the shadows, keeping a low profile, so that he can work on us while we are off guard.

Only Jesus Christ was never deceived by Satan. He knew what Satan was like. While He was on earth in human form, Jesus knew

that He was susceptible to Satan's deceits. He prayed constantly that His Father would deliver Him from the evil one (Matthew 6:13).

The rest of us have been deceived. Satan is too clever for us. He outwits us constantly. His influence has filled the world with opportunities to break God's law.

Don't misunderstand. Your sins are not all Satan's fault. (Mind you, Satan wouldn't mind if you did believe that—it would get your mind off overcoming *your* faults.) Even if Satan was not around, you would still slip and fall occasionally, because you still have human nature, which is not naturally obedient to God's law (Romans 8:7, Galatians 5:17). These scriptures are talking about *you*—not Satan.

But Satan has produced an environment where you will find more opportunities to sin, and where you will hurt yourself more and more as you take advantage of them.

God knows our weaknesses

When my children were learning to walk, my wife and I did the best we could to help them with their first steps. My wife would be at one end of the room, and I at the other. We made sure that the distance between us had plenty of pillows and cushions scattered around. We put towels over the sharp edges of the furniture, just in case.

The baby would waddle along, lurching from side to side, with a look of great pleasure and achievement on her face. Her ex-



The goat chosen for the Lord was sacrificed as a sin offering, and its blood, symbolic of Christ's shed blood, was sprinkled on the mercy seat. The sins of Israel were placed on the head of the Azazel goat, which was led away into the wilderness. Illustrations by Ken Tunell.

pression quickly changed to dismay and disappointment when she fell over. The pillows saved her from hurting herself, and after some reassurance and encouragement, she was ready to start again.

That is how God is with us. He knows we have weaknesses. Psalm 103:10-14 is reassuring in this regard. God knows we have to learn by experience, trial and occasional error to become what He wants us to become. This life is the training ground for eternal life.

In a world ruled by God, filled with His way and His love, there would be every incentive to do things right. If we made mistakes, there would be swift, sure, kind, considerate instruction. Maybe, if the situation warranted it, there would be punishment, but even that would be designed toward encouraging us to try again. Everything would be pointed toward helping us succeed. Any loving parent can understand that.

But Satan is not our parent. He isn't even our servant. He is our enemy—dedicated to making us fail. As the present ruler of this world, he has created an environment where there seem to be definite advantages to doing wrong. There are, just as in Moses' day, definite "pleasures of sin" (Hebrews 11:25).

You can break God's law and



seem to get away with it. Then, when Satan has lulled you into a sense of false security, the payoff comes—disillusionment, misery, pain, suffering and death.

Satan may appear as an "angel of light" (II Corinthians 11:14), but he has no love for any of us, no sense of responsibility, no loyalty and no mercy. His one aim is to see us cut off from God and destroyed. We often forget that. God never does.

Our Father in heaven understands that some of the blame for the mistakes we have made must rest squarely on the head of this evil fallen angel.

That is why God instructed ancient Israel in the ceremony of the two goats.

The Day of Atonement

After the goat representing Jesus Christ was sacrificed, the other goat—for Azazel, or Satan—was brought forward. This goat was not killed—for Satan is an immortal spirit being.

It's unfortunate that some translations of the Bible call this the "scapegoat." *Scapegoat* means "somebody who carries the blame for others." Nothing could be further from the truth. Satan knows what he is doing, and he is fully to blame.

The high priest confessed the sins of the people on the head of this goat, and then it was sent away live into the wilderness, symbolic of Satan's fate. Not until Satan has been restrained can the world be at one with God.

The Day of Atonement (or Atonement) comes after the Feast of Trumpets and before the exciting Feast of Tabernacles. Thus it focuses on events that will occur after Christ's Second Coming, but before He fully establishes God's government on earth.

God's Kingdom will be an environment where men and women will be encouraged to live according to the laws of God. Mercy, compassion and understanding will rule. Society will be organized toward helping mankind succeed. But first, Satan must be removed. How?

You'll read how in Revelation

20:1-3: "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished."

That is what "Mesha" was enacting on the Day of Atonement long ago in the wilderness. The goat chosen for the Lord was a type of Jesus Christ. It was sacrificed as a sin offering, as Jesus was, when He paid the penalty for *our* sins.

But Jesus Christ will not pay the penalty for Satan. Satan knows better. He deliberately rebelled against God, and he has deliberately tried to cut us off from God, too. As "god of this age" (II Corinthians 4:4) and "prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2), he has spent nearly 6,000 years trying to make the potential sons of God as rebellious as he is.

Satan won't win—he can't. God's love is too great, His mercy too all-encompassing. God knows that without Satan working against us, the story would have been very different.

The great lesson of the Day of Atonement is that our sins are truly forgiven and forgotten, and that Satan will be banished to where he can hurt us no more.

Mesha was sure the goat had gone. He walked back to the camp, stopping off at the outskirts, where several urns of water had been left for him. He washed himself and rinsed out his clothes thoroughly, resisting the temptation to take a drink.

As the sun began to set, Mesha walked confidently back to the Tabernacle. The Azazel goat was gone.

The ceremonies were over and the fast was ending. Everyone now seemed in a happy, relaxed mood. The chosen people felt at one again with their God. □

GOOD NEWS



The Next World Will Not 'Go to the Devil!'

*Jesus Christ
will soon end Satan's
reign of terror over
the human family.*

By Paul Kroll

God and man have a bitter rival who dreams of destroying them. He is tough, unrelenting and spiritually psychotic.

This enemy is known by various names—the devil, the adversary, the accuser of the brethren and Satan.

Satan is the great separator—he wants to keep the love bond between man and God permanently broken. He *seems* to be succeeding, but he isn't.

Most humans, though, have been hoodwinked. They've entered a destructive spiritual relationship with their own worst enemy and haven't even realized it. Satan has deceived the whole world (Revelation 12:9).

Satan has blinded human minds to disbelieve and actually hate God (II Corinthians 4:4). How? By guiding human society into a way of thinking and doing that makes God's way seem foolish by comparison.

One example: Company A is desperately trying to grab the

same market for its product as Company B. Economic survival is at stake for both. Now, God's way says to consider others' interests and not just our own (Philippians 2:4). But Company A is in a death struggle over a market. Applying such a naive principle to its relationship with Company B seems downright foolish.

How Satan communicates

Why is human society filled with such competition, hate and war? Simply put, the human race is on the same wavelength of thought as the devil.

Satan is called the "prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2). He can manipulate minds to think as he does. But the very idea that an unseen being influences human thought seems unbelievable to most.

Of course, spreading distorted and self-serving information is the aim of all propagandists: *Make 'em do it without knowing why or who's pulling the strings.* And Satan is the father of propaganda. The apostle John concluded Satan had propagandized the whole human race: "The whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one" (I John 5:19).

Even those who are reconciled to God—true Christians—must be wary, because "the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8).

Satan already has the whole world running after him. He doesn't need to seek them out. Satan's object is to destroy those who are now in an at-one love relationship with God, or those about to enter that relationship.

Satan swoops down like a bird of prey over those to whom God has offered the bread of life. The devil pounces on these people, hoping to rip the word of life from their minds. His goal is to keep them from a relationship with God (Mark 4:15, Luke 8:12). Some people don't hold onto the bread tightly enough, and Satan snatches it from them.

The only way to avoid Satan's diabolical purpose is to "submit

to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (James 4:7).

The devil must be chained

There can be no true spiritual peace on earth or in heaven as long as the devil is free to create disharmony. Satan must be chained, taken out of the midst of God’s Family.

Of course, Satan has never been able to do any more than what God allows. God holds supreme power in the universe, and He has permitted Satan to work his dirty tricks for only one reason: They all fulfill God’s purpose toward His human children. God has used Satan to help us understand the enormity of sin, its terrible divisiveness, the hurt and confusion it causes.

But God has also been working out a master plan to rid the world of Satan’s influence forever!

Nearly 2,000 years ago the Lord of the Old Testament emptied Himself of divinity (Philippians 2:5-8). As the human Jesus, God vanquished Satan (John 12:31). Jesus kept His relationship in an at-one-ment condition with His Father, being without sin (Hebrews 4:15).

“Be of good cheer,” Jesus told His disciples. “I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Jesus accomplished this feat in the flesh, thus breaking ground for all humans to do the same. When humans follow Jesus, they, too, are at one with God and free from the bondage of sin.

Jesus’ perfect life and His atoning sacrifice subverted Satan’s plan: “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil” (I John 3:8).

Jesus’ death paid the penalty for all human sin. With what aim in mind? “That through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Hebrews 2:14-15).

Yes, that’s what the Day of Atonement is all about. It pictures the release of humans from every form of physical and spiri-

tual bondage and the binding of our common enemy, Satan.

The prophet Isaiah spoke of spiritual liberty coming to earth’s inhabitants: “It shall come to pass in the day the Lord gives you rest from your sorrow, and from your fear and the hard bondage in which you were made to serve” (Isaiah 14:3).

Original sin and fall

Isaiah then tells us Satan and his system, represented by the king of Babylon, “shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit” (verse 15). The devil is seen as having “fallen from heaven” and as being “cut down to the ground” (verse 12).

In the distant past, the archangel Lucifer attempted to oust God and take over control of the entire universe. He boasted:

“I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High” (Isaiah 14:13-15).

But Satan was not God. God intercepted Satan and defeated his attempted coup. Satan was cast out of God’s ruling headquarters “as a profane thing” (Ezekiel 28:16).

Jesus spoke of seeing “Satan fall like lightning from heaven” (Luke 10:18).

How great was that fall! One third of the angels—an army of uncounted millions—followed their champion Lucifer and suffered defeat (Revelation 12:4-9). The glorious light-bringer became the hideous adversary, and his angels became demons.

Who’s the real boss?

Satan will be given his eternal prison sentence in the future. The God of the universe “has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day” these angels “who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own habitation” (Jude 6). Satan and his demons continue to roam this earth, however.

Satan himself is in charge of planet earth until Christ comes to replace him.

Of course, Satan is not the *ultimate* authority. God holds the ultimate control over everything that goes on. But God has given over, with limitations, the spiritual rule of earth to Satan.

But the time of impeachment is quickly approaching. The ter-



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mination of governmental office is near for Satan.

His judgment is symbolized by the Day of Atonement. God will liberate the world by deposing its present spiritual ruler. “For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels” (Hebrews 2:5). The next world will not “go to the devil”!

Satan hates God’s people

Presently, a very few called individuals, scattered around the world, are in a condition of at-one-ment with God. They must endure a world led by this wicked spirit, Satan. But we are almost at the point when, as Paul wrote, “The God of peace will crush Satan under your feet” (Romans 16:20).

When Christ intervenes in this world, Satan will be enraged. “For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time” (Revelation 12:12). Satan will not take his turning out of office lying down. He will wage a

titanic struggle to hold onto his spiritual dictatorship. His goal? Destroy those in an atoned condition with God.

There's a good reason why Satan hates God's people so passionately. They will take over his domain, as kings and priests with Christ (Revelation 5:10).

But God will intervene to protect His faithful people from Sa-

God reveals Satan's role in human sin and his ultimate fate through the Day of Atonement.

tan (Revelation 3:10). Those not protected (verse 18) will be persecuted by Satan: "And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 12:17).

Satan's great deception

Meanwhile, Satan will have hatched a startling plan to keep anyone else from being reconciled with God. His insane goal will be the destruction of humanity (Matthew 24:22) and of the returning Christ.

As part of his plan, Satan will give certain human leaders extraordinary powers to do supernatural signs.

In Revelation 13 we see "another beast" (verse 11) representing a great religious authority. "He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by

those signs" (verses 13-14). Satan will gather together and organize the armies of many nations, using them as a strike force against the returning Christ (Revelation 16:14)!

But this human army will be hopelessly outmatched by the returning Christ: "These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them" (Revelation 17:14).

What will happen to Satan and his demons? They will be restrained and separated from the human race during Christ's rule on earth: "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit" (Revelation 20:1-3).

That's Satan's fate during the Millennium. He will be shut up "so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished."

Humanity will be at one with God during this time. The earth will experience peace and happiness as humans, reconciled to God, learn to think and act according to His standards.

At the end of the Millennium, Satan will be allowed free for a short time. He will deceive those individuals who still refuse to obey God. Under Satan's leadership, human armies will be organized in another attempt to take control of the world:

"They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city [Jerusalem]" (Revelation 20:9). But in a replay of events that occurred during Christ's Second Coming, these armies will also be vaporized: "And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them."

The final judgment

Now comes Satan's final fate. He is "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone" (Revelation 20:10), the same fire that in-

stantly ends the lives of all humans who refuse to become one with God in spirit and deed.

Physical fire, of course, has no effect on a spirit being. God's real objective is to keep an incorrigible Satan and his demons permanently separated from the God Family. How? Two small pieces of New Testament information imply Satan and his demons will be spiritually chained in a kind of "black hole" far away from God's Family.

Peter refers to "wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, to whom the gloom of darkness is reserved forever" (II Peter 2:17). Jude speaks of "wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever" (Jude 13).

This separation of Satan and his demons into the "blackness of darkness" will fulfill two purposes. It will keep divisive and hateful angels away from God's Family, and it will serve as a punishment for their sins.

Atonement explains it

God reveals Satan's role in human sin and his ultimate fate through the Day of Atonement.

Jesus will replace Satan in rulership over the earth. At-onement with God will then become a fact for all humanity: "I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. . . . For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more" (Jeremiah 31:33-34).

The sacrifice of Jesus will be applied to all. Humans will be given God's spirit and mind. All the world will be at one with its Creator. The archenemy, Satan, will be chained. What a wonderful time!

It's all pictured by the Day of Atonement. It's no wonder God looks on the Day of Atonement as an important memorial—and as a tremendous picture of things to come! "This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year" (Leviticus 16:34). □

The Resurrection at the LAST DAY

Who will be in it? When will it occur?

By Herman L. Hoeh

The news had just reached Jesus. Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary, was ill.

When He heard the news, Jesus sent word to the sisters: "This sickness," He assured them, "is not unto death" (John 11:4).

Two days later Jesus set out for the town of Bethany, near Jerusalem, where Lazarus and his sisters lived. But by the time He

arrived He found that Lazarus "had already been in the tomb four days" (verse 17).

Had Jesus misunderstood the seriousness of Lazarus' illness? Now that Lazarus was dead, Martha had become quite concerned. "Lord," she said, "if You had been here, my brother would not have died" (verse 21).

Jesus assured her, "Your brother will rise again" (verse 22).

Now notice Martha's response: "I know that he will rise again in

the resurrection at the last day" (verse 24). What did she mean by "the resurrection at the last day"?

Some Jews understood

Martha, of course, was Jewish and had been taught from childhood about the resurrection. She had read the resurrection chapter of the Hebrew Bible—Ezekiel 37. And she was certainly familiar with Job 14:10-12:

"But man dies and is laid away; indeed he breathes his last and where is he? As water disappears from the sea, and a river becomes parched and dries up, so man lies down and does not rise. Till the heavens are no more, they will not awake nor be roused from their sleep."

That did indeed seem far distant into the future. No wonder Martha said "the resurrection at the last day."

The Pharisees would have agreed with her. They, too, believed in a resurrection at the last day. They would certainly have cited as added proof the prophecy found in Ezekiel 16:44-63. These verses speak of a distant future time of resurrection of the ancient inhabitants of Sodom, Samaria and Jerusalem.

Jesus had this prophecy in mind when He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!" (Mark 6:11). By "that city" Jesus meant one that refuses the message of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus here associated "the day of judgment" with the resurrection at the last day. But if the Jews thought they understood that yet distant future time of resurrection, they—and that included Martha—certainly did not understand that there would be an earlier resurrection—one that would be a thousand years earlier than the one at the last day.

Job understood it!

Job, of course, was aware of a resurrection and a judgment of mankind as a whole "at the last day." But the patriarch Job also

Ken Tunell



understood that there would be an earlier resurrection:

"Oh, that You would hide me in the grave, that You would conceal me until Your wrath is past, that You would appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man dies, shall he live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait, till my change comes. You shall call, and I will answer You" (Job 14:13-15).

Notice that Job associated this—his—resurrection with a *change*—"till my change comes."

Paul, the apostle, referred to this same change when he wrote: "Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (I Corinthians 15:51-52).

Paul and Job are speaking of the same resurrection—one that to the Jews was a mystery, because they did not understand it. Martha had not understood it. Paul reveals this resurrection occurs at the sound of a trumpet—

"the last trumpet." This is explained in the book of Revelation as the seventh or last trumpet (Revelation 11:15). This is the time when "the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

This last trumpet introduces the wrath of God (verse 18), described more fully in Revelation 15 and 16. Job understood that the time of his resurrection would be at the occasion of God's wrath, through which he would be protected (Job 14:13).

So Job and Paul understood that there would be a *first* resurrection, at the sound of a trumpet—when Jesus returns to rule the nations. Or as Job worded it: "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in [Hebrew: "without" (Revised Standard Version and Jewish Publication Society 1917 translation)] my flesh I shall see God" (Job 19:25-26).

It was this first resurrection, a mystery to the Jews, that Jesus explained to Martha when she

assumed that Lazarus would rise again in "the resurrection at the last day."

Jesus said to her: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26).

Martha, puzzled, answered, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world" (verse 27).

Jesus shortly afterward raised Lazarus from the dead as proof He had the power to give life everlasting—to change from flesh to spirit (I John 3:2, John 4:24)—those who believe and do what He says.

Jesus explains the difference

The first resurrection, when Jesus returns at the sounding of the seventh or last trumpet, is a special resurrection—one that occurs a thousand years before a second resurrection at the last day. This first resurrection is for those who have become "the work of Your hands," said Job of the Lord (Job 14:15). Even

HOW LONG Will They Again Live in the Flesh?

Why is it that the Christian world never grasped that the resurrection scene in Ezekiel 37 is *to mortal life* in the resurrection to judgment at the last day?

For the simple reason that they assume Jesus Christ was raised in the same body that died!

Jesus was raised a spirit being, an everlasting God being, with the power to appear as flesh and bone, but whose life was never again to be dependent on breathing air and on the circulation of blood. But the scene in Ezekiel 37 is one of living, breathing beings—mortals.

So now we ask, How long will they live as mortals in that

resurrection while they are being judged? (Remember, the Church of God is composed of those being judged *now*, as I Peter 4:17 tells us, and who will be eternally rewarded *after* they are judged.)

How long will they live while being judged?

Only one passage in the prophets reveals the answer—Isaiah 65:17-25, especially verse 20. We would expect that period to be like the 1,000 years because it is under the government of God, administered by Christ. But this millennial-like prophecy is an immediate prelude to the creation

of "new heavens and a new earth" (verse 17).

So we read in verse 20: "There shall be no more thence [from that time on] an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed" (Authorized Version).

The Authorized or King James Version is clearer and more faithful to the original Hebrew than most modern translations because the King James Version is *not* an attempt to interpret the text.

Several important thoughts are wrapped up in this concise prophecy. Though many infants

though the few who are now called to be the work of God's hands die, they "shall live," said Jesus (John 11:25), and "shall never die" (verse 26). That is, they shall never die the second death.

But the resurrection of the human race at the last day is a different or second resurrection, one in which multitudes of people rise to live again in the flesh (Ezekiel 37) and "return to their former state" (Ezekiel 16:55).

It is for them a time of judgment or trial in which they learn about God's plan for mankind. The book of life is opened to them (Revelation 20:12).

They will look back on a thousand years of God's rule and compare it, historically, with the first 6,000 years of human rule under the sway of Satan. They will have to choose, as the few whom God calls today have to choose between God's way or Satan's. It will be their time of judgment, as today is the time of judgment for God's Church (I Peter 4:17).

Eternal life will be made available as God's free gift for all who repent and overcome their sinful

natures. But for those few who refuse God's ways, their end is described in Hebrews 6:8.

Last Great Day

The Jews in Jesus' day were familiar with the resurrection at the last day. They had at least a partial understanding of the Kingdom of God and the general or second resurrection because they kept the annual festivals of God, which explain God's plan of salvation. That is why they expected the Messiah to come to restore the Kingdom.

But they failed, as a whole, to see the *first* resurrection revealed in the Festival of Trumpets that opened the late summer and early autumn festival season.

After the first resurrection comes the putting away of Satan, pictured by the Day of Atonement, so he cannot deceive the nations for a thousand years (Revelation 20:1-3, Leviticus 16). Then comes the second spiritual harvest, pictured by the Festival of Tabernacles.

This second spiritual harvest occurs after the first resurrection and includes those who live into the Millennium and their descen-

dants born during the thousand years of Christ's rule.

But this second spiritual harvest would not be completed unless all who have lived and died throughout the past 6,000 years of human history are included. And that brings us to the second resurrection and the last festival of God in the seventh month.

The seven days of the Festival of Tabernacles make up the sixth festival of the year. But this festival is immediately followed by another one-day festival—called simply the Eighth Day by the Jews, but called the Last Great Day by Christians.

This Last Great Day derived its name among early Christians from the fact that it commemorated the conclusion of the plan of salvation.

Just as the millennial reign of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, is pictured by the seven-day Festival of Tabernacles and is followed by a general resurrection, so the Festival of Tabernacles was followed by one last day—the eighth, which is a distinct one-day festival wrapping up God's great plan.

Only those who keep this day fully understand its meaning! □

will begin life anew at that time, there will be no more infants born from that time on. There will be family, marriage and love, but no more human reproduction. The aged will begin life anew at that time, but they, too, will fulfill their new span of life.

How long will it be? One hundred years, two jubilee (50-year) periods. That is a good length of time for anyone to learn and live God's ways.

Immortality for the righteous!

At the conclusion will be two classes—"the child" and "the sinner." The last part of verse 20 says "the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." They shall be burned up as this old earth melts with "fervent heat" (II Peter 3:10). They shall be ashes under the soles of the feet of the righteous (Malachi 4:3).

But who are those spoken of in

the expression "the child shall die an hundred years old"? "The child" is in contrast to "the sinner."

One is reminded of Luke 18:17: "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

The prophecy in Isaiah refers to those who become "as a little child"—childlike in humility, openness and sincerity. "The child" is one who is righteous.

How, then, does one understand the expression that "the child shall die"?

Because the righteous will not continue to live in the flesh. They shall be given immortality by becoming spirit beings, the eternal sons of God, just as the righteous who are alive when Christ returns at His Second Coming: "Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be

changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (I Corinthians 15:51-52).

Notice: the living righteous, when Christ returns, will not sleep in death, yet they shall die! It is "appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

Changed in a moment

The change from mortal to immortal is a death of the cells of the natural body, but it will happen "in a moment," as Paul said, so one will not even be aware of a loss of consciousness!

Isaiah 65:20 is describing this kind of momentary death, when one is changed to immortality; not the lake of fire, which is the second death, which the sinner who is accursed suffers.

So the great purpose of the second resurrection will be finished in 100 years! □

Where are you? A ridiculous question, you might reply. Well, that depends on who's asking.

God once asked Adam and Eve, "Where are you?" (Genesis 3:9). Of course, God already knew where they were—hiding out in the Garden of Eden.

But King David made it clear that there is no place to hide from the Creator (Psalm 139:7-12). God is everywhere through His spirit. Wherever you go, He knows where you are.

So why did God ask Adam and Eve, "Where are you?"

A metaphorical question

The question is a metaphor. God was addressing their spiritual state. Our first parents had just disobeyed their Creator by eating the forbidden fruit.

For the first time in history, humans were experiencing pangs of conscience. Adam and Eve had sinned—broken God's law (I John 3:4). And they had been caught red-handed.

To convict them, God also asked, "Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" (Genesis 3:11). God already knew the answer to this question, as well.

Adam and Eve both confessed, but it was not real repentance. Each cried crocodile tears. Both blamed someone else.

This same old story has been repeated uncountable times. People sin. Their consciences wound them. Then they try to hide from the consequences.

All humans, except Jesus Christ, have followed in Adam's footsteps: "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin ["The wages of sin is death"—Romans 6:23], and thus death spread to all men, *because all sinned*" (Romans 5:12).

We don't suffer directly for Adam's sin, but for our own. Nonetheless, Adam, the father of

the human race, was responsible for starting the whole process.

Your unique opportunity

You have an opportunity that Adam and Eve didn't have. You live in a different age. The Bible speaks of three worlds. Our first parents lived in "the world that then existed" (II Peter 3:6)—the time before Noah's Flood. You live, now, in "this present evil world" (Galatians 1:4, King James Version) ruled by Satan, "the god of this world" (II

Where Are You?

By John Ross Schroeder

Corinthians 4:4, KJV). But you live on the threshold of God's "world to come" (Mark 10:30, KJV)—the world tomorrow.

Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty for our past sins. As a result, God's holy spirit is now available to those God calls (John 6:44, Acts 2:39). The fact you are reading this magazine indicates God has called you.

If so, you now have access to God. But your responsibility doesn't stop there. You have to do something.

The apostle Peter told a large group of potential converts: "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" (Acts 2:38).

Anyone who has not repented is in a sad state. On one particular occasion David described his

feelings *before* he repented: "When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer" (Psalm 32:3-4). But this was prior to repentance.

David continued: "I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord'" (verse 5).

And what resulted from David's contrition? "And You forgave the iniquity of my sin."

Reconciliation to God is a supreme step in a human's life. Without it he or she will never experience true peace.

In that same psalm David described the state of one who has been reconciled to his Creator: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man [or woman] to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile" (verses 1-2).

What about you? Where are you—spiritually? Are you at peace with yourself—and with God? Or are you still hiding in the garden with Adam and Eve?

Personal help

Maybe, just maybe, you are getting tired of this chaotic, sin-sick world. Maybe you'd like some help and advice.

The Worldwide Church of God has hundreds of trained ministers in many nations. These men and their wives are dedicated to helping those God has called. None will ever contact you unless you first request it, but if that is your desire and you really want solid answers to your spiritual questions, please ask for a private appointment.

In the meantime, write for our free booklet *Just What Do You Mean—Salvation?* Just send your request to our address nearest you. You can find a list of our addresses on page 2. □

First Steps Toward Responsibility

BY DEXTER H. FAULKNER

PART FIVE

Learning responsibility begins in the home. You parents play a big role in teaching your children to stand on their own feet.

Your job is so important that your children will not be well prepared for life if you don't teach them the skills and traits they need to be successful!

Assigning chores

One of the best ways to teach your children responsibility is to see that they have regular chores around the house. Since the child has the privilege of living in his home, he also should have certain duties he must perform.

Assigning chores also has other advantages. It's a way to teach your children what they need to know to be independent. Future adults need to know how to wash and repair clothing; how to plan, shop for and cook a meal; how to clean the house; how to change a tire; how to make a budget and stick to it.

If you teach your children to do these things, when it comes



time for them to leave home, they will feel confident that they can take care of themselves.

Household chores in which everyone participates also teach teamwork and unity. When family members work together to make home life comfortable and enjoyable, each person's contribution is recognized as important.

Begin to teach neatness by example. Do you make your bed in the morning and clean up after

yourself? As the saying goes, "Attitudes are caught, not taught." Your own attitudes toward neatness, organization, work and responsibility will be reflected in your children.

Dads must take an active role in child training. Parenting isn't just woman's work, as some men have been taught. Today, when both parents may work outside the home if children are older, there's more need than ever for fathers to be actively involved.

In assigning chores, make sure children are capable of doing what you ask. But don't underestimate them. As soon as they're big enough to get around, they will probably be right in the middle of what you're

trying to do—"helping."

Encourage your children

Encourage your children by giving them simple tasks little hands can manage. Don't discourage them because you can do the job better and faster. It's more important for them to learn the skills and lessons than it is for you to have a perfectly clean home.

When you're rearing a child,

it pays to remember what it's like to be a child. Chances are, you'll remember that parents are often impatient, insensitive and even harsh with their children. Impatience is a clear signal to children that no matter what they do, their parents won't understand.

When children begin feeling that communication with their parents is difficult and unpleasant, they become self-doubting and uncertain. Curiosity, learning and the ability to get along with others can be stifled.

Remember to fully explain what the child is supposed to do, what tools are necessary and so on. First show your child, step by step, what to do. Let him or her watch you while you wash the dishes or clean the sink. Next have your child try, while you watch and correct any mistakes. After your child has mastered the chore, let him or her do it alone. Check the job later to make sure it is done right.

Don't let your child work with dangerous chemicals or sharp objects until he or she is old enough to understand the danger, and even then be close by in case of problems.

Don't expect absolute perfection. Avoid criticism. If necessary, show children how to improve, but be sure to offer lots of praise and encouragement. It's natural for children to *make* messes, not clean them up!

Don't teach your children that they are helping Mommy. That reinforces the notion that the job belongs to Mommy. It doesn't. Kids must grow up knowing that the mess belongs to the person who made it. The dirty clothes belong to the one who got them dirty. Teach responsibility.

Building good work habits

Praise your children for keeping their rooms neat. Thank them

Begin to teach by example. Do you make your bed in the morning and clean up after yourself? Your own attitudes toward neatness, organization, work and responsibility will reflect in your children.

for picking up things to avoid having someone trip over them. This teaches concern for others. Show them appreciation for doing a good job because they're good workers.

Start early with this kind of communication with your child and you will see great results. Even 3-year-olds can set a table and collect trash, though it may take twice as long as for someone older.

Make it possible for smaller children to pick up after them-



Illustrations by Dan Andreassen

selves by having a bedspread or comforter on the bed that is easy to straighten, child-level hangers and shelves and so on. Keep jobs small and simple for young chil-

dren so they don't get frustrated or confused.

Have a starting and stopping time. Help children see an end to their job so they don't get discouraged. This also helps them to learn to plan their time, another valuable characteristic.

Using a job chart or list can be effective. Children can check off chores when they finish. Everyone loves checking things off on lists or adding a star or happy face. It brings a real feeling of accomplishment.

What about allowances?

Children need to learn that they will not be paid for everything they do in life. Don't pay your children for doing chores, because chores are responsibilities they are given simply for being part of the family. They also receive an allowance (if it is your policy to give allowances) because as members of the household, they share in the recreational budget.

If your child does an unusual chore, something not his or her responsibility (like painting a fence or cleaning the attic), you may want to give him or her a bonus.

Training our children to do chores regularly is one of the hardest tasks we face as parents. It takes time and effort, persistence and patience. But the rewards are enormous and long lasting.

Solomon was inspired by God to write, "Even a child is known by his deeds, by whether what he does is pure and right" (Proverbs 20:11).

Our Creator gave humans work as a joy and blessing. We need to be diligently teaching and setting a good example for our children daily.

Teaching children to work develops in them responsibility, accountability and, most of all, a sense of mature self-worth. □

Are You Praying in Detail?

King David wanted his prayers to be like incense—beaten fine, heated up and sweet-smelling to God. Your prayers can be the same way, if you follow the formula in this article!

By George M. Kackos

You want to pray. You realize you must pray effectively to get close to God and to receive His help.

At first, the words flow freely. You feel good. You feel like God is really listening.

But then, as quickly as it began, the flow diminishes. Soon it is a trickle. The well is running dry, although almost no time has elapsed! You can't think of anything to say, or anything that seems *worth* saying. Feeling frustrated and disrespectful toward God, you shamefully give up.

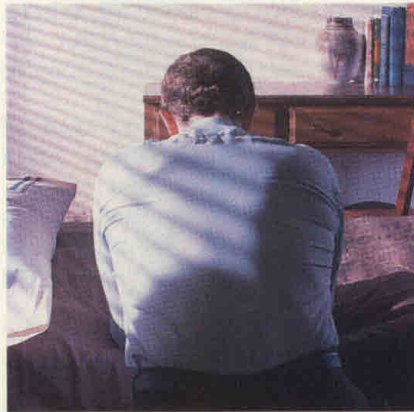
Sound familiar?

Praying effectively is not easy, but it is vital if you wish to build a strong relationship with God—if you want to enjoy a right attitude and real *answers* to your prayers.

What can you do? How can you lengthen your prayers and make them more effective? How can you build a bond with God that pleases Him and brings you joy and peace of mind?

Make your prayers like incense

Let's begin by understanding what God doesn't want. Jesus made it clear—repetitive, mindless prayers that require little or no thought are a waste of time: "When you pray, do not use vain



G.A. Belluche Jr.

repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words" (Matthew 6:7). They won't!

So what is the right way to pray?

The Bible more than once likens prayer to incense. David prayed, "Let my prayer be set before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice" (Psalm 141:2). Seated around God's throne in heaven are 24 elders—spirit beings who serve God. In their hands are bowls of incense, picturing our prayers (Revelation 5:8).

But why does incense represent prayer?

- *It is beaten fine.* To make your prayers effective, you must pray in detail. Name names. Give circumstances. Describe feelings. Avoid vague generalities.

- *It is a blend of ingredients*

(Exodus 30:34-36). Your prayers should contain a blend of thoughts on a variety of topics. Discuss *everything* with God (Philippians 4:6).

- *It is heated up.* Without heat, incense is of little value. It doesn't give off its aroma. The same is true of prayer—without fervency (heat), prayer is dead, lifeless, useless (Matthew 15:7-8)!

- *It smells sweet.* Prayer should be appealing to God—something that He wants to savor (Proverbs 15:8). If you obey God in everything you do, your prayers will please Him—and they will get results (I John 3:22).

Jesus' sample prayer outline

Jesus explains in Matthew 6:9, "In this manner, therefore, pray." In verses 9 through 13, He went on to give a basic outline you should follow when you enter your private place (verse 6) to converse with God the Father.

Of course, the exact words you should speak are not these. Jesus was teaching that you should take His outline and enlarge upon it. Let's examine this sample prayer:

- *Our Father in heaven* (verse 9). Through the indwelling of the holy spirit we become children of God and heirs of salvation. Besides concentrating on this special relationship with your majestic Father in heaven, humbly remember how, as He sits on his

throne, He exercises complete control of all the universe. You must develop a deep awareness that God truly is your great Father in heaven.

● *Hallowed be Your name.* God is Creator, Revelator and Ruler, with vast powers that are always used in perfect love and wisdom. Let Him know in your own words how deeply you appreciate and admire all the fruits of His character (Galatians 5:22-23).

● *Your kingdom come* (verse 10). The disastrous problems of this world will cease in the coming world tomorrow, and an age of happiness and harmony will prevail! God wants us to look beyond this world and take a special interest in the coming utopia. He wants us to pray that God's own true Church will successfully prepare for it.

● *Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* Doing God's will is a requirement for salvation (Matthew 7:21). Ask God daily for a heart that will willingly surrender to His direction.

● *Give us this day our daily bread* (verse 11). Each day you have pressing needs that weigh heavily on your mind. You should bring these, as well as the needs of others, before God. But don't bring them in a selfish attitude—you assuredly won't get results (James 4:3). Instead, be loving and thankful. Think of the needs of others as well as your own (Philippians 2:3-4, 6). Think of how you can use any blessings God gives you to serve others, also.

● *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors* (verse 12). *Debts* refer to sins that need to be forgiven by God. Besides repenting before God (I John 1:9), you must be willing to forgive others when they repent (Luke 17:3-4). If you are harsh and spiteful, God won't forgive your sins.

● *And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one* (verse 13). Ask God to protect you and His other people from accidents and illnesses. Ask Him to heal those who are ill and to encourage those who need

more inspiration. Above all, ask God's protection from Satan the devil. Ask God to give you the desire to obey Him, "for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).

● *For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.* Amen. End your prayers as you begin them—with praise to God and statements recognizing His glory and power and coming Kingdom.

Now that you have a better grasp of what God wants, how do you transform this outline into a dynamic prayer that gets results?

Praying effectively

Don't neglect to take time to meditate. Ask yourself: "What do I want to bring to God's attention? What does He want to hear?"

Follow David's example. He cried: "Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation. Give heed to the voice of my cry, my King and my God, for to You I will pray. My voice You shall hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning I will direct it to You, and I will look up" (Psalm 5:1-3). Many people find it best to pray in the morning, when their minds are clear and fresh and the day's challenges and opportunities still lie ahead.

Write down your thoughts. You could label note cards, for example, with headings such as Heavenly Father, God's Work, God's Name, God's Kingdom, God's Will, Personal Needs, Needs of Others, Forgiveness, Deliverance.

Some have found it useful to divide a looseleaf notebook into sections covering these and other areas. Pages can then be added or removed as needs change.

Be sure to list sick and needy people as well as words, phrases or names that will trigger thoughts when you pray. If it's worth thinking about, it's worth praying about.

By studying your Bible, talking to others and thinking deeply, you can come up with all kinds of areas to pray about. Now you'll

face a new dilemma: How to adequately cover all these subjects in the time you have for prayer!

The answer: Vary the content. Change what you say. You can do this by going through your cards or notebook daily, but emphasizing different sections. By doing this you will pray about all the essential things. Nothing will be left out.

Of course, don't let your cards or notebook become a straight-jacket. You don't want your prayers to sound like memorized speeches, which can become vain repetitions. Take time to review your notes before and as you pray so you can talk about them from a fresh viewpoint.

Let current events and whatever is on your mind stimulate your prayers as well. God's spirit will move you and intercede for you with God (Romans 8:26).

And pray on your knees during your daily prayers (Psalm 95:6, Luke 22:41), unless it is physically impossible for you to do so. Of course, in emergencies, or when you simply have a spare moment and would like to talk to God, you may pray wherever you are. "Pray without ceasing," says I Thessalonians 5:17.

The results are worth it!

Think about your prayers from God's point of view. What would *you* want to hear? Short, unimaginative, dull prayers mumbled from a fogged mind just moments before you flop into bed? Or prayers that are whiny and shamefully self-centered?

No! You would want to hear well thought-out, heartfelt, outgoing prayers that are presented from *your* (God's) point of view.

This is why God gave us the outline prayer. Take time to think deeply about what you'll say and then say it fervently, really meaning it!

The results will be well worth the effort. Jesus said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name, He will give you. . . . Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:23-24)! □

Fruits of the Spirit

Kindness? But what about “gentleness”? If we are following in order the list of the fruits of the spirit as given in Galatians 5:22-23, shouldn't we be discussing gentleness in this issue of *The Good News*?

True, the King James Version has, as the fruit of the spirit following longsuffering, “gentleness.” But the word *gentleness* as a translation leaves something to be desired.

Much better is the word *kindness*, as found in the New King James, the Revised Standard Version and other translations. An elephant can be gentle. So can an earthquake. But kindness is an *attitude*. It involves action directed away from the self.

Many other words often used in the Scriptures cover common ground with kindness. Compassion, mercy, grace and forgiveness are such words. Kindness is the desire, the inclination, the willingness to do good—even when that good is undeserved. It is being merciful, mellow and easily approachable.

The kindness of God

Are you sometimes discouraged because of the obstacles God allows in your life? Do you sometimes pray that God will help you, yet you lack real conviction that God will answer your prayer because you know you don't deserve an answer?

If your reply is yes, you need to understand more deeply the kindness of God.

Whatever set of circumstances you find yourself in, God has allowed for your ultimate good. He is not out to trip you up, nor is He indifferent to your situation. He cares! He wants to work things out for your benefit.

God knows better than you do that your previous sins have separated you from Him (Isaiah 59:1-2). You don't merit His attention! But His merciful kindness overrides that fact.

Perhaps the most oft-quoted Bible verse is John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him

should not perish but have everlasting life.” But how many who so glibly recite John 3:16 stop to realize that this verse and the verse that follows it describe the greatest act of *kindness* that ever has been or ever shall be? God sacrificed His beloved Son to save the undeserving world.

The Bible records many instances showing how the kindness of God was manifested in Jesus' life as a human.

One day an individual suffering from the horrible disease of leprosy threw himself on his knees before Jesus. Lepers were supposed to keep their distance from the rest of the population. Jesus could have stepped away, as many others would have. But He didn't. That was already kindness on His part.

“If You are willing, You can make me clean,” the leper appealed (Mark 1:40). Notice that the

leper had no doubt as to what Jesus was capable of doing. But He wasn't sure how great Jesus' kindness toward him would be.

Now, Jesus didn't have to respond to this request. This leper was not of a mind to become one of Jesus' followers. In fact, immediately after being healed, he directly disobeyed Jesus' instructions and caused Jesus considerable inconvenience.

But here was a person in desperate need. “And Jesus, moved with compassion”—God's lovingkindness—“put out His hand and touched him, and said to him, ‘I am willing; be cleansed’ ” (Mark 1:41).

You may be aware of what God *can* do for you. But you may be limited in your understanding of how great His kindness is. God is merciful. Never lose sight of that truth.

Over and over again the Psalms express assurance that God will help us. Why? Because we deserve it? No, but because “His merciful kindness is great toward us” (Psalm 117:2).

Do you want to understand how great? Then consider Psalm 107 as it describes various situations in which God is kind to those who look to Him for help. (Note that the Hebrew word translated “mercy” in verse 1 and “goodness” in verses 8, 15, 21 and 31 could just as easily be translated “kindness.”)

In His kindness, God supplies the needs of those

God Loves Kindness— Do You?

Have you considered to what extent kindness is a part of Godlike character?

By Clayton D. Steep

who have lost their way (verses 4-9). He sets free those who are in bondage (verses 10-16). He helps those suffering the results of their own blunders (verses 17-22). He delivers those threatened by forces beyond their control (verses 23-32).

Do you see yourself in any similar situations? God is extremely generous with His blessings (verses 33-42). And we deserve none of them. Meditate on these things. "Whoever is wise will observe these things, and they will understand the lovingkindness of the Lord" (verse 43).

What does your life reflect?

A person with God's spirit will reflect the kindness of God in his or her dealings with fellow humans. Kindness is the inclination to do more than what a situation may strictly call for or require. It is wanting to go that extra mile, being thoughtful, considerate, forgiving and merciful.

Jesus pointed out to His disciples that loving one's friends is not sufficient. For "if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same . . . But love your enemies, do good . . . and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Highest. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil" (Luke 6:32-35).

And whereas Matthew records Jesus as saying, "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (verse 48), Luke quotes Jesus' statement, "Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful" (Luke 6:36).

In view of this, you can see how much being merciful, compassionate and kind is a part of God-like perfection.

A godly motivation

This is not to say that kind deeds are never done

by unconverted persons. To the contrary. Many kind, charitable works have been done by individuals not having God's spirit. Sporadic manifestations of various degrees of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and self-control are possible in the lives of unconverted people.

But the strength of such manifestations is strictly from the human sphere and therefore may be from peer pressure, fear, guilt, intimidation, vanity, pride, self-righteousness or a combination of such characteristics of human nature.

A Christian must have the good traits listed in Galatians 5:22-23 in his or her life, but their strength and motivation must be from a different source. They must be the unselfish, ever increasing fruits of the holy spirit—God's nature—not the undependable fruits of human nature.

Simple acts of kindness

There is no list of dos and don'ts when it comes to kindness. The main rule is "just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise" (Luke 6:31). The apostle Peter urged Christians to "be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous" (I Peter 3:8). The Greek word translated "courteous" literally means "friendly minded."

Be thoughtful. Put yourself in the shoes of others. Be on the lookout for things you can do or say to make the lives of others more pleasant.

"And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32).

Expressing the fruit of kindness means simple, thoughtful acts of caring for other people. Jesus Christ said the kind act of giving a drink to one who is thirsty is love in action. Photo by Hal Finch.

When Jesus talked about judging between the "sheep" and the "goats," notice what He mentioned as being the ultimate determining factor as to who will inherit the Kingdom of God. It is to what extent knowledge and spirituality is translated into actively helping and serving others, especially Christ's brethren:

"For I was hungry,"

Jesus said, "and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me" (Matthew 25:35-36).

None of these are complicated acts requiring great talent and ability. They are simple acts of kindness. Micah summed up all God requires of you this way: "To do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8, Revised Standard Version).

Be helpful. Be flexible. Be approachable. Be agreeable. Be forgiving. Be, in a word, kind. □



COMING IN THE GOOD NEWS

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◆ WHY Does God Govern the Way He Does?

Is the purpose of God's government just to tell you what to do? Is it to produce harmony, peace and unity? You may be surprised, but none of these is the ultimate purpose. This article reveals what it is.

◆ When Christians Clash . . .

What should you do—and *not* do—if you find yourself in conflict with another one of God's people?

◆ Singles: Stay Out of the Pits!

Are you giving up hope for ever marrying? Are you discouraged or lonely? Read about five common pitfalls singles need to avoid.

◆ Walk in the Way of Goodness

It is hard for humans to agree on what is good. We hold on to our own philosophies and ways—even to our own destruction. But God defines good for us! Our series on the fruits of the spirit continues.

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