



The BIBLE STANDARD
and Herald of Christ's Kingdom

The Hymn of Easter

Inside . . .

The Hymn of Easter

Two Salvations

Jewish Belief in the Resurrection

Knowledge versus Emotion

WHOLE NUMBER 792

MARCH 2002

The Hymn of Easter

Christ, the Lord, is risen today,
Alleluia!

Sons of men and angels say:
Alleluia!

Raise your joys and triumphs high;
Alleluia!

Sing, ye heavens, and earth, reply,
Alleluia!

Love's redeeming work is done;
Alleluia!

Fought the battle, victory won;
Alleluia!

Lo! He's risen conqueror,
Alleluia!

And shall sink in death no more.
Alleluia!

AT THE BIRTH of the creation we are told that there was a hymn of rejoicing. Job was confronted by God with the question, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" and continues, "declare, if thou hast understanding" (Job 38: 4). Verses 5-7 read:

Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;

When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

The universe and the earth itself, as they came from the hand of God were immensely pleasing to the Creator and a cause for jubilation. God declared the creation of Adam to be "very good" (Gen. 1: 31). And as the early days of Eden unfolded and Adam was joined to Eve, it seemed to the angelic host to be, indeed, a paradise.

It was not long before the paradise was shattered by disobedience, sin. Then came the murder of Abel by his brother Cain, and mankind was launched on a course of increasing disobedience and anarchy, leading to the pronouncement by Jehovah in Genesis, chapter 6, that He had determined to destroy mankind from the face of the earth, except for the eight of Noah and his family.

The necessity for the flood, which annihilated all air-breathing creatures not on the ark, is a glaring reminder of the words of Rom. 6: 23 that, "the wages of sin is death." Following the flood and the necessary reconstruction of society, the outlook may have appeared brighter. Here was a new start, a fresh leaf turned over — surely a chance to build a new and better world.

Alas, history records that after an abortive attempt to unite the people (under Nimrod), the race,

Cover: Westminster Abbey, London. Founded in 1065, this historical building has been the site of coronations, famous weddings, and burials. It was redesigned in the 13th century under Henry III and was refounded as the Collegiate Church of St. Peter in Westminster by Queen Elizabeth I in 1560. The famous towers were designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor, and were added at the beginning of the eighteenth century. *Photograph on cover and on p. 28 used courtesy of size-isnt-everything.co.uk*

"Lift up a standard for the people" — Isa. 62: 10

Contents March 2002

The Hymn of Easter 26

The dirge of death which mankind has moaned for centuries is to give way to a cantata of praise and joy. The Resurrection story is the glorious theme.

Two Salvations 30

The love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind. Learn how God has appointed more than one season for salvation. (Part 3 of our series on Habakkuk 2: 2.)

Bible Question Box 34

• *Jewish Belief in the Resurrection*
Of Interest 33
Knowledge versus Emotion 35
Announcements Back Page

The Bible Standard and Herald of Christ's Kingdom (ISSN 0006-081X) is published monthly by the Laymen's Home Missionary Movement, Bernard W. Hedman, General Editor; John Davis, Associate General Editor. Published regularly since December 1951. **Mailing Address:** The Bible Standard, 1156 St. Matthew's Road, Chester Springs, Pennsylvania 19425-2700, U.S.A. Postage paid at the post office in Chester Springs, Pennsylvania 19425. **Web Site:** www.biblestandard.com and www.biblestandard.co.uk **Rates:** single issue — \$1.50; by subscription (12 issues annually) — \$7.00.

having been scattered at Babel, fought one another for supremacy of territory or culture. By the time of Abraham's sojourn, the people were generally pagan.

The Faith of Abraham

Before his call from God, Abraham lived in Ur, a seaport. Ur used to lie on the Persian Gulf, but due to deposits of silt, it is now about 50 miles from the sea. Ports are generally places of trade and resulting prosperity and it is assumed that Abraham's family built up its wealth in connection with this trade.

God called Abraham to serve Him and required that Abraham leave Ur and journey to Canaan, a distant place. For Abraham, his wife, Sarah, and his family, Ur meant law and order, but Canaan was a remote and dangerous country. To live there would be a risky business. But Abraham obeyed God and gave up his home and security to live in a tent and wander in a land where there was no police force or army.

The route was shaped like a crescent, since to take the direct path was to risk certain death in a pitiless desert without water. This route is generally known as the "Fertile Crescent," and follows the rivers Euphrates and Tigris part of the way. Abraham visited towns which had been built along the rivers. One of these was Haran. Here Abraham stayed, with his father, Terah, and other kinsfolk, until Terah died.

Then, at the age of 75, Abraham proceeded down to Beersheba in the land of Canaan, along with Sarah, and his nephew, Lot. The party included many servants. The descent into Canaan meant that Abraham had to pass through Hazor, Damascus, and Salem (Jerusalem). In following God's command, Abraham, his family, and his servants were as strangers in a strange land. Hundreds of miles from home, Abraham had to fight many enemies while in Canaan.

The Apostle Paul tells us that Abraham had his eyes fixed on a better country, that is a heavenly one (Heb. 11: 16). Not only so, but Abraham by faith looked forward to the fulfillment of God's promise that from him would come the seed to bless all the families of the earth (Gen. 12: 3). Again, Paul, writing of Abraham's seed, identifies the seed as Christ.

In the midst of the heathens a joyful hope had been planted, and Abraham lived for that hope. In words which hark back to Abraham's infertile wife, Sarah, Isa. 54: 1 says: "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord." Sarah had had little cause for singing. Being unable to bear Abraham's child, she had offered her

handmaid, Hagar, to him, and of this union Ishmael was born. Ishmael, though a son, was destined to be a child of a lesser promise; he was not that "seed." In harmony with the heavenly promise, at the age of 90 Sarah gave birth to Isaac. And what a song of joy there was! If ever a boy was loved by his parents, it was Isaac. Here at last, thought Abraham, was the child of the promise. Imagine his anguish on being asked by his God to sacrifice his son. That test, we know, had a happy outcome, but the figure that it provided was a dramatic one. Here, in the near-sacrifice of Isaac, was the forecast of the actual sacrifice of the son of God, the true seed.

The Birth of Christ

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2: 13, 14).

The introduction of Jesus into this earth was both lyrical and dramatic. Heavenly hosts sang praises to God at the birth of His Son, just as they sang at the birth of the creation. How we wish we could be transported back in time to witness such a thing!

Here in simple surroundings was the beginning of the greatest story that could be told. The famous birth was followed by an obscure childhood, and it was not until He reached 30 that Jesus began the ministry which changed history.

SONGS OF SADNESS

Much of mankind's history has been a dirge of death. Most of us sense that even now, in a world of greater luxury and leisure than has been experienced before, living is often unsatisfactory and, frequently, a trial. The reason for this is not simply the fact that we die — it is the underlying alienation which our condition implies: we have lost fellowship with our Creator. These effects are brought home most pointedly in John 11 with the account of the raising of Lazarus.

Sorrow for the dead is a sign, not of weakness, but rather the reverse — it is usually a sign of love and sympathy, of something other than selfishness. That most eloquent of Biblical verses, "Jesus wept," is laden with all the pathos of the ages (John 11: 35). The lamentations that followed the death of Lazarus cut to the heart of Jesus, expressing as it did the deep sorrow and grievous loss of the beloved Lazarus. We have all felt such grief. For the Master the feeling went even deeper. He did not sorrow because He believed that Lazarus was lost in an eternity of torment. Nor did He imagine that Lazarus was in heavenly bliss — to call him back from such delight would have been unwelcome from Lazarus' point of view.

Rather, He had a much deeper appreciation of the awful meaning of the word death than could possibly be entertained by those about Him. He appreciated more than could any of the fallen, dying race, the great blessing and privilege of living, and what a terrible affliction was death — destruction. More than this, the very dying condition in which these people — His friends and companions — found themselves was itself an indicator of how far the human race was from fellowship with God and from His approval.

As a Son beloved, one who had delighted always in the smile of His Father's face, Jesus felt the hopeless grief through which the human family must stumble. He alone held the keys of hope, for it was His mission, as appointed by the Father, to lay down His life as the Ransom, that the bereft might know hope.

He knew intimately the gracious plan of God for the rescue of the race from destruction. He realized that for this purpose He had come into the world, that He might give His life as the Ransom-price for Father Adam, and thus incidentally for every member of the Adamic race involved in death through the first transgression in Eden.

To those around Him He gave the soundest and best comfort. "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," He said (John 11: 11-14). He portrayed the interim of death — in anticipation of the Resurrection — as an unconscious, dreamless, quiet, restful, undisturbed, *waiting* slumber. What a touching figure!

The Old Testament Scriptures frequently refer to the death condition as a sleep. For example, David *slept* with his fathers, as did Solomon (1 Kings 2: 10; 11: 43). Likewise in the New Testament our Lord speaks of Jairus' daughter as sleeping (Luke 8: 41, 42, 52). The Apostles frequently used this same figure to represent their resurrection hope. Of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, it is written that, though stoned to death, he "fell asleep," trusting in Jesus (Acts 7: 60).

This too, we remember, was the comfort that the Apostle Paul set before the early Church, saying, "Comfort one another with these words," namely, "them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him"; "concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope" (1 Thes. 4: 18, 14, 13).

In 1 Cor. 15: 6 the Apostle, referring to Church members who had died, wrote that "some are fallen asleep," and went on to say in vs. 15-18 that if Christ was not raised from the sleep of death, "then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." In verse 20 he gives the joyful and hope-inspiring assurance

that Jesus had been raised from the dead, and, indeed, had "become the firstfruits of them that slept." In verse 51 he remarks, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," referring to those of the Church who would be living at the Second Coming of Christ, whose resurrection change would not be preceded by a period of unconsciousness in death.

The Resurrection Pre-figured

For the sisters of Lazarus Jesus acknowledged that a calamity had befallen the household, and He wept tears of sympathy. But He held out as the strongest and only truthful comfort for the sorrow of the bereaved ones, the hope of the resurrection — "Thy brother shall rise again." "I am the resurrection and the life." "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth" (John 11: 23, 24; 5: 28, 29; Dan. 12: 2).

Jesus asked for the location of the tomb in which Lazarus had been laid, intent upon giving an illustration of the power which, by and by, in the resurrection morning He will exercise toward the whole world of mankind (Acts 24: 15). Standing at the door of the tomb, our Lord cried in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth" (John 11: 43, 44), awakened by our Lord's power and authority.

This, like other miracles performed by our dear Redeemer at His First Advent, we are particularly told, was a pre-manifestation of His coming glory and power: an advance demonstration of what He will do at His Second Advent, only that the work at the Second Advent will be universal — higher, deeper, broader in every way (Matt. 17: 1-9; 2 Pet. 1: 16-18). "The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped" (Isa. 35: 5); then all that are in their graves will come forth, not merely to relapse again into blindness, lameness, sickness, and death, but to enjoy a permanent recovery — not only from the loss of natural sight and hearing, but also to have the eyes and ears of their understanding opened (1 Tim. 2: 4-6). Mankind will be aroused from the sleep of death, not to a few more years of suffering under present conditions, but to the intent that by obedience to the Divine arrangement of the Millennial Age (Acts 3: 22, 23) the awakened ones may all attain to the glorious perfection — physical, mental, moral and religious — lost by Adam's disobedience (Matt. 18: 11).

"Times of Refreshing Shall Come"

Glorious hope of a glorious time! What wonder that the Apostle exults over it as "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," when "He shall send Jesus Christ"! No wonder he sings out concerning those

years of the Millennial Age as “times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3: 19-21)! Here is the perfect cure for the sickness of sin and death.

After being awakened from the dead, Lazarus died again; likewise, Jairus’ daughter died again, as did the son of the widow from Nain (Luke 7: 11-15). Their awakening from the sleep of death was *temporary*, a meaningful illustration of our Lord’s greater power to come. Jesus’ miracles “manifested forth his glory” — they were foregleams of the coming power, glory, and blessed work of the gracious Prophet, Priest, and King, whom God has appointed, not only to redeem the world, but also in due time to grant to all mankind the opportunity for everlasting life secured by that redemptive sacrifice. Jesus by the grace of God tasted death for every man (Heb. 2: 9; 2 Cor. 5: 14). Everyone is to be saved from the Adamic condemnation and will be taught about Jesus, the only name under heaven whereby any are saved (Acts 4: 12; 1 John 2: 2).

After mankind have thus been saved from the Adamic death and condemnation and have come to a knowledge of the Truth, they will then be given an opportunity to gain everlasting life on earth. If they prove unfaithful in their testing, they will be destroyed from among the people (Acts 3: 23).

Without the resurrection of Christ Himself all of the great blessings which are to come would not be possible. As the Apostle Paul says, “If Christ be not raised, . . . ye are yet in your sins” (1 Cor. 15: 17). The condition of death is styled in the Scriptures, “the land of the enemy” (Jer. 31: 16). Disguise the facts as we may, death is an enemy. The suggestion that it is a friend comes, not from the Word of God, but from heathen philosophies. The suggestion that the dead are more alive than they were before they died is fanciful and not at all derived from the Word of God. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; *for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest*” (Job 14: 21; Eccles. 9: 5, 10; italics ours).

The Adversary has kept up this false teaching for over 6,000 years, and at last, not only heathendom is deceived by his misrepresentation of facts, but very many of Christendom likewise hold to the word of Satan, “Ye shall not surely die,” and believe that the dead are not dead; and they reject the testimony of God’s Word that “the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6: 23), that “the soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezek. 18: 4, 20), that death has passed upon all men, because all are sinners (Rom. 5: 12), and that the hope of the

The word “Easter” occurs once in the Scriptures (Acts 12: 4), and there it is a mistranslation; it should be rendered “Passover.” The name Easter was adopted from the heathen. It is of Saxon origin, and imports a goddess of the Saxons, or rather of the East, Estera, whose festival was celebrated in the spring of the year, about the Passover season. The adoption of this name, and the application of it to the period celebrating our Lord’s death and resurrection and ascension, down to the coming of the Pentecostal blessing, was evidently an attempt to let Christian institutions the more easily supplant those of heathenism. Like most of these concessions, it dates from somewhere about the third century. This heathen origin of the name Easter need make no particular difference in our minds, for we no longer use it to celebrate the goddess of the East. Among Protestants the name has been definitely attached to one day instead of to a period, as in old time, and as it is still used by Catholics. That one day is called Easter Sunday. Any memorial of our Lord’s resurrection will always be precious with His people, but to those who rightly appreciate the matter, every Sunday is an Easter Sunday, because *every* Sunday is a Memorial commemorative of our Lord’s resurrection.

Church as well as the hope for the world lies in the fact that Christ died for our sins, redeemed us from the death sentence, and in the Father’s due time is to effect a universal resurrection of the dead.

A HYMN OF DELIVERANCE

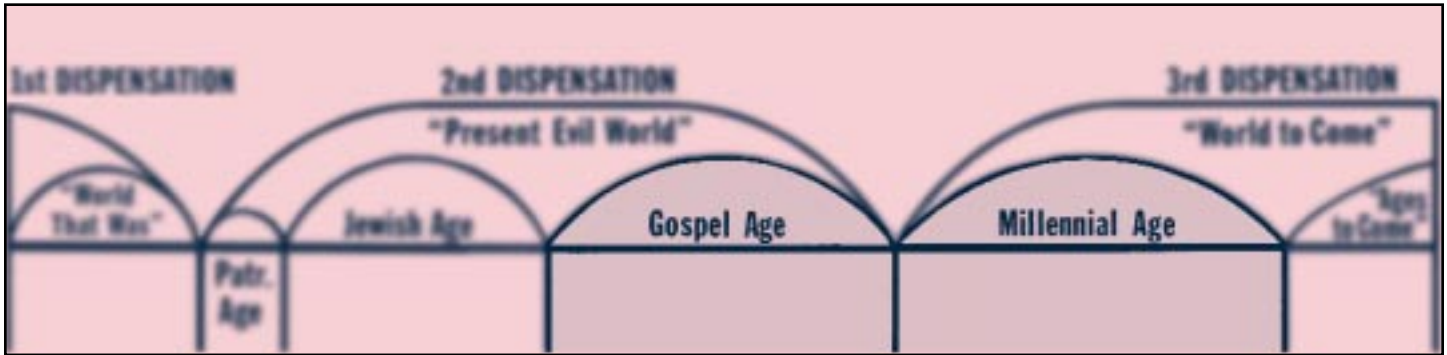
Let us comfort our hearts with the true comfort, the substantial assurance of the Word of God — there shall be “a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust” (Acts 24: 15). *All* that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth (John 5: 28). The thousands of millions who have gone down into the great prison-house of death will be released, because the Great Redeemer has the key, the power, the authority, to bid the prisoners to come forth, even as the Scriptures declare (Rev. 1: 18; Psa. 68: 18; Isa. 42: 7; 49: 9). When the Kingdom of God comes to the earth and when Satan is fully bound, the darkness of ignorance and superstition will be rolled away and the true Light will enlighten all mankind (John 1: 9).

The first to be raised are the Church, the Bride of Christ — “the firstfruits of them that slept.” “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection . . . they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years” (1 Cor. 15: 20; Rev. 20: 6). Glorious resurrection morning! Glorious reunion! And when the *afterfruits* come forth — the whole redeemed world — the angels will recapture their first thrill at the dawn of creation, and sing again for joy as they witness the *re-creation* of the earth!

TWO SALVATIONS

"He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

(1 John 2: 2)



Part 3 in our series on Habakkuk 2: 2: "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it"

OUR FEBRUARY ARTICLE in the Divine Plan series discussed in broad terms God's great purpose to bless all mankind in due time — Joy in the Morning. Due to Satan's perversions of the Truth, the ways in which this great and glorious purpose will be realized were obscured for many centuries, yet God's Word clearly shows how Jesus by His sacrifice is able to save "to the uttermost" those who come to God by Him — either now, or in that Millennial morning (Heb. 7: 25).

OUR PRAYER FOR THE WORLD

Christians for generations have prayed, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," using the words of the Lord Jesus in His model prayer (Matt. 6: 10). That God's rule in heaven is already established cannot be doubted, and prominent in the minds of most thinking Christians is the desire to see the same peace and harmony on earth, the same respect for His righteous laws, and the same freedom from evil influences. Both in the close confines of family life, and in the wider structure of earth's society, nothing seems more desirable than the achievement of the great ideal laid down in God's Law as summarized by Jesus: supreme love to God, and equal love to one's fellow men. And inherent in the prayer is the conviction — possibly unrecognized by some — that the earth is destined to remain a dwelling place for humankind into future ages beyond comprehension.

But questions arise. Evidently earth is at present under a great disadvantage, in that death is inevitable and it would appear that a lifetime of learning is lost with each succeeding generation. Yet Jesus said that because God so loved the world of mankind, He sent His Son to *save* them and grant everlasting life to all who would believe in Him (John 3: 16, 17).

What does it mean to be "saved"? And as belief is a requirement, what happens to those not "saved" — the

unbelievers? What prospect is there for those never learning of the only name under heaven whereby man can be saved (Acts 4: 12) — those who lived and died before Jesus came, those dying in infancy, those who through mental incapacity have been unable to recognize Him as Savior? What of those who even today do not hear the message, or do not hear it in such a way as to give them a true perception of God's purpose and Christ's mission, handicapped and demoralized as many are by the influences of a godless world? The Bible has the answers and assures us that ". . . the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save" (Isa. 59: 1).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SAVED?

As God has promised everlasting *life* to believers, it follows that *death* is the enemy from which He desires to rescue us. Intelligent thinking dismisses medieval ideas of an after-life somewhere "up there," eternally strumming heavenly harps, sitting around a celestial throne, watching the earth literally burn up. Yet Christians rightly understand that there is a *heavenly* inheritance promised to faithful believers in the "Day of Salvation" (2 Cor. 6: 2; 1 Pet. 1: 4), and to such "heavenly-minded" ones, earth is a temporary dwelling place where hard lessons are learned and characters are developed to fit them for a place in heaven.

Careful students can trace in God's Word His intention from before the foundation of the world that some would be privileged to share in both the sufferings and the rewards of Christ (Eph. 1: 4). Such a prospect was unknown to men before Jesus came to earth and taught that "the kingdom of heaven" was at hand (Matt. 4: 17). To the Jews, earthly prosperity was the reward for faithfulness to their covenant with God. Only a few of more godly character saw dimly a loftier prospect for mankind in God's great scheme of things.

Abraham was perhaps the greatest of those godly men of old. Called “the Friend of God” (Jas. 2: 23), his faith and obedience brought him great privileges. The Scriptures tell us that the Gospel was preached beforehand to Abraham, and in some way — “afar off” — he grasped the idea of a heavenly kingdom, a “better country” (Gal. 3: 8; Heb. 11: 8-16). Yet he became the forefather of a people whose hopes and expectations were almost exclusively of an earthly sort — to become a great nation in a God-given land of their own, secure from enemy invasion, blessed with material prosperity and destined to be a blessing to all the other nations of earth (Gen. 12: 2-4; 17: 6-8; 22: 15-18). While these hopes were realized to a limited extent under the reigns of David and Solomon, death took its toll unabated, and there was no salvation from its curse. Life in all its fullness was by no means within their grasp.

And if God’s favored people, to whom the promises were given, should share the common experience of labor and sorrow, sickness and death, what hope could be offered to the world in general?

THE GLAD TIDINGS

The Gospel preached beforehand to Abraham was a thumbnail sketch of the great design God had in view to rescue the whole human family from the death sentence. Jesus said that “the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19: 10). Life itself had been lost. At the dawn of human history, an act of disobedience had forfeited for mankind the favor of the Creator, who alone could extend to them those conditions conducive to everlasting life. As the Apostle wrote, “Sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men” (Rom. 5: 12).

What was the pre-eminent feature of God’s promise to Abraham? It was surely: “In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12: 3; Gal. 3: 8). The means by which this great objective would be realized, however, could be understood only after Jesus came as the deliverer who would “save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1: 21). And St. Paul in Gal. 3: 16 identifies Jesus Christ as the true “seed” of Abraham, through whom God’s love would flow to bless all mankind.

Yet a superficial view of the work of Christ would lead us to the regretful conclusion that in fact comparatively few of the human race have been blessed. Why so? Is God’s plan of salvation then a failure?

GOD’S TWO-FOLD PURPOSE

The Scriptures undoubtedly set forth *two* salvations through Jesus Christ, entirely separate and distinct — one to a heavenly inheritance, the other to an earthly inheritance, and “rightly dividing” the Word of truth will help us to keep the distinctions in mind.

God’s love emphatically includes every individual of the human family, and He desires that all shall be saved and come to “the knowledge of the truth,” that Jesus gave himself a ransom (a corresponding price) for all (1 Tim. 2: 4-6).

The “great salvation” is for an elect class who are counted in with Jesus as part of the promised *heavenly* “seed” of Abraham and are destined to share both His sufferings in this life and His heavenly throne in the next (Heb. 2: 3; Gal. 3: 29; 2 Tim. 2: 12). The invitation to this Divine calling began at the outset of our Lord’s ministry, when He gathered His first disciples — the nucleus of the early Church. Thus began the *Gospel Age*, highlighted on the chart at the head of this article.

Apart from a faithful few, the Jewish nation rejected Jesus as their Messiah, and the invitation to become part of that seed, members of the Body of Christ, was therefore opened to the Gentiles — all nations (Matt. 28: 19; Acts 15: 14). God’s way of expressing to Abraham that his seed would be “as the stars of the heaven” (Gen. 22: 17) now became significant, showing that believers in Jesus, exercising the same faith as Abraham, but now with new and heavenly hopes made clear, were counted as Abraham’s (spiritual) children (Rom. 4: 11; Gal. 3: 7).

On the other hand, the *general* salvation is an offer of free grace to all who, for whatever reasons, were not called to a heavenly inheritance. This general salvation for the non-elect is to be offered during the reign of Christ over the earth, the *Millennial Age*, shown in highlight on our chart.

God’s great love for the world is by no means exclusive to those who in the great “day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6: 2) respond to that call and believe. His love emphatically includes every individual of the human family, and He desires that all shall be saved and come to “the knowledge of the truth,” that Jesus gave Himself a ransom (a corresponding price) for all (1 Tim. 2: 4-6).

Jesus’ sacrifice of Himself to take the place of condemned Adam is destined to release all of Adam’s posterity from the sentence of death. It will give those not called to a heavenly inheritance the opportunity of

attaining perfect everlasting life *on earth*, as an essential part of God's eternal purpose. The promise to Abraham is seen in its great breadth of vision. His natural descendants are practically numberless, yet when all who in the fullness of time become believers are gathered together under Christ (Eph. 1: 10), Abraham's earthly seed shall indeed be "as the sand . . . upon the sea shore" (Gen. 22: 17).

THE HEAVENLY SALVATION

The call to be of this privileged class is a limited one. In His first advent Jesus stated plainly that no man had ascended into heaven (John 3: 13), and Peter says the same of David (Acts 2: 34). Even John the Baptist, whose greatness Jesus acknowledged, would have a status in the earthly resurrection below that of even the least called to the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 11: 11). Jesus was "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14: 6), and the way was not opened until He had paid the price for sin.

At Pentecost the disciples received the holy spirit — Divine confirmation that they were now prospective members of the Church, begotten to the Divine nature — and their work began in earnest. The conditions governing the salvation of the Church are wholly different from those which will apply to the world. Called out of the world under a Divine invitation to suffer with Christ in their earthly lifetime, they receive in the Millennial Age — the period during which Christ's Kingdom operates — a "crown of life" and sit with Christ Jesus in His throne (Rev. 2: 10; 3: 21).

Scripture and secular history record the lives and deaths, the persecutions and the martyrdoms of the saints down through the Gospel Age. Theirs was a narrow way, the conditions demanding, the sufferings extreme. Along with their Lord, they presented their bodies as living sacrifices. They preached the Gospel to the world, seeking all who would "take up his cross" (Matt. 16: 24), and follow the Master, and thereby in due time "the fullness of the Gentiles" was gathered into the elect Church (Rom. 11: 25).

THE HEAVENLY SALVATION: ONE DOOR CLOSSES . . .

As this heavenly salvation first began to be spoken of

by the Lord at His first advent (Heb. 2: 3), and thus had a definite beginning, so it must have a definite ending. This is necessarily so, in order that the great work of blessing the human family might begin. When does the opportunity to share in the heavenly salvation come to a close? Jesus promised his disciples that He would come again, His first purpose being to gather them to Himself (John 14: 3), their faithful course having earned for them a heavenly inheritance along with their Lord. This reward does not imply for the Church an eternity of idleness and selfish bliss, a purely personal indulgence in the glories of their new station.

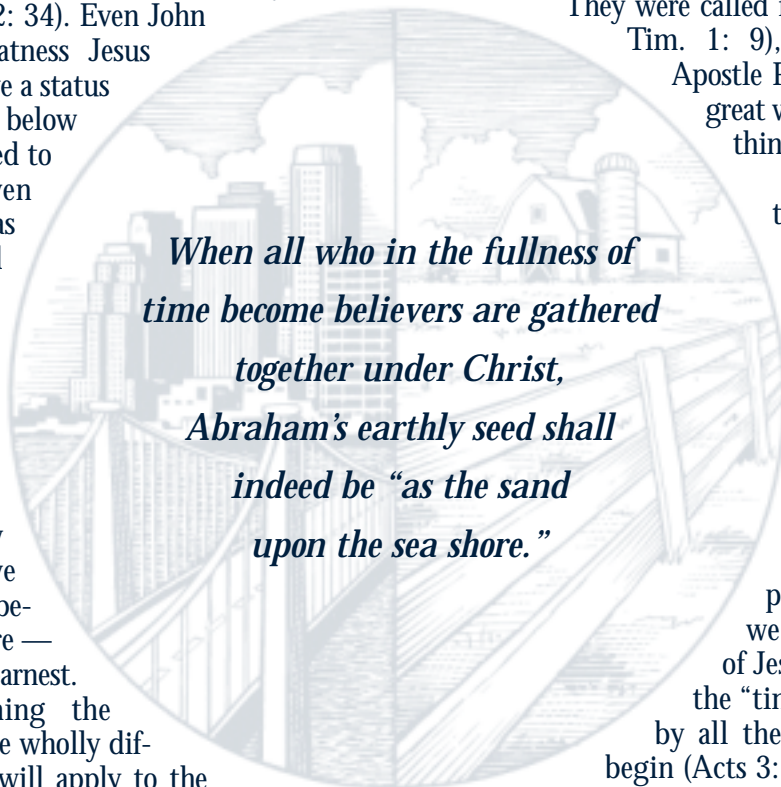
They were called for a *purpose* (Eph. 1: 9-11; 2 Tim. 1: 9), briefly explained by the Apostle Paul as a participation in the great work of reconciling to God all things in heaven and in earth.

Thus the Church in their resurrection share not only the Divine nature of the Heavenly Father, but they reflect His own character qualities, and radiate the same love that God had for the world, which earnestly desired that the world should not perish, but gain life everlasting. The Bible provides many evidences that we are now living in the days of Jesus' Second Advent and that the "times of restitution" spoken of by all the holy prophets are soon to begin (Acts 3: 19-21).

. . . ANOTHER DOOR OPENS: THE EARTHLY SALVATION

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15: 22). The rescue of the world from the death sentence was the paramount reason for our Lord's sacrifice. It does not involve for the world in general a change from human to spirit nature, but does guarantee a restoration to the perfection of the original man, made in the image of his Creator and surrounded by every blessing necessary for his comfort and eternal joy.

None today can claim to be "saved" in the fullest sense, as we all suffer the common experience of sorrow, sickness, and death. Yet many have a deep faith in God's Word and trust His promise that in Abraham's seed shall "all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12: 3) — in some way, at some time. As the Apostle expresses it, the whole creation groans, waiting (though mainly unaware of it) for the manifestation of the sons



of God, when Christ and His Church will begin the great restitution process (Rom. 8: 19-22).

St. Peter, pointing down the centuries to this glorious prospect, calls it “the times of refreshing” and says that all the prophets in some way described the blessings of this Millennial day — the thousand years of God’s Kingdom during which Jesus with His Church will rule over the earth and bring mankind back into harmony with Divine principles (Acts 3: 19-21). After thousands of years of physical, mental, moral, and religious degeneration under the “prince of this world” — Satan (John 14: 30), and a bitter experience with evil, the peoples of earth will, in the restitution period, undergo a vast educational program as they come to know their Creator and discover joys and prospects formerly beyond human thought or imagination.

THE REGENERATION

Looking ahead to the time when the Christ would be reigning, Jesus refers to it as “the regeneration” — the rebirth, or giving of new life (Matt. 19: 28). This was not exclusive to the Church, and He spoke plainly of the time to come when the dead would *all* be raised, some to immediate (eternal) life, the rest to *judgment* (John 5: 28, 29). Judgment, however, is not merely the passing of a sentence. Mankind has already been sentenced to death, and the lifting of that sentence will bring to all what they have never yet had: an experience with *good* instead of evil, and a full and fair trial for life.

The “day of judgment” is the period when the world is judged, or ruled, righteously, and includes in-

struction and correction. All must come to a clear understanding of what is at stake, and be enabled to exercise their God-given free-will to choose or to reject the terms upon which life can be attained. The outward and visible renewal of the human body, and its restoration to the “glory and honour” (Psa. 8: 5) of its original state will be a reflection of the greater inward regeneration of mind and heart, as reconciliation with God becomes an unchanging reality. The judgment day is a day to be welcomed. As the Psalmist puts it: “Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad . . . before the Lord: . . . for he cometh to judge the earth; he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth” (Psa. 96: 11-13).

Leaving aside for the time being the many practical considerations that come to mind as we contemplate the “new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Pet. 3: 13), let us take God at His Word, and pray with unflinching faith for His Kingdom to come. When Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, takes to Himself His great power, and reigns on the earth, the great majority of men and women will surely respond to God’s great love, and enter into that everlasting life in all its fullness, which was our original destiny. Fair of form and feature, noble in character, and irrevocably linked in heart and mind to God’s righteous laws, we shall enter into future ages of glory as they unfold to reveal more and more concerning our own place in God’s eternal purposes.

* * *

of interest . . .

ABOUT 2,000,000 MUSLIMS from around the world last month travelled out of Saudi Arabia’s holy city of Mecca on their annual pilgrimage, or Hajj. Cars by the hundreds of thousands set off to follow the route of Mohammed to the barren plain of Mina and the slopes of Mount Arafat. The pilgrimage is the largest yearly mass movement of people on the planet. It is intended to cleanse the soul of the believer.

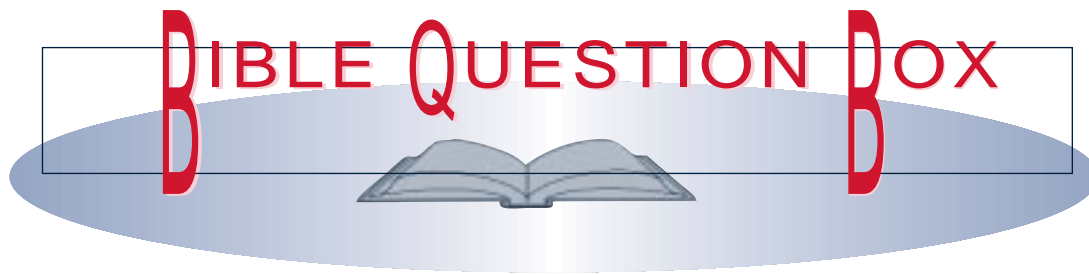
There were long traffic jams as buses left the city, some with pilgrims riding on top. The journey is obligatory for every Muslim, at least once in a lifetime. Over 1,000,000 of the pilgrims were from outside Saudi Arabia. Of that number, about 200,000 came from Indonesia and 10,000 from the United States. The end of the Hajj is marked with a feast.

* * *

A STUDY released at the American Association for the Advancement of Science’s annual meeting in Boston shows that fish stocks in the North Atlantic Ocean are now just one sixth of what they were 100 years ago. The researchers say that only comprehensive action can save the North Atlantic from an ocean-wide collapse in fish. They urge the immediate introduction of marine reserves, cuts in fishing fleets, and the abandonment of subsidies (now around \$2.5bn a year). If these measures are not taken, they say, the fishing industry could soon have to turn to species like jellyfish and plankton to make alternative fish products.

— *The British Broadcasting Corporation*

BIBLE QUESTION BOX



Q Jesus said to some of the Jews: “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (John 5: 39). Why did Jesus say, “Ye *think* ye have eternal life”?

A Jesus’ words here were really more of a reproach to the Jews than a command or invitation, as we shall see. In the context, He referred to witnessing regarding Himself as the One sent by Jehovah — in v. 31 He referred to His own testimony; in v. 32 to that of “another,” a true one; in v. 33 to that of John the Baptist, His forerunner, who also testified of Him; in v. 36 to a greater testimony than that of John — of the works that He Himself did; and in v. 37 to that of the Father Himself. Then Jesus told those Jews that of course they had never heard the Father’s voice nor seen His form, but that this would not have mattered if only they would have had His Word truly abiding in their minds and hearts (v. 38).

Accordingly, Jesus told those Jews that they should search the Scriptures (the Old Testament), for by keeping the Law contained in them (which they believed they were doing), they would gain eternal life — “which if a man do, he shall even live in them” (Ezek. 20: 11, 13, 21). Jesus knew that if they truly searched the Scriptures with open minds and humble hearts, they would see that it was impossible for them to keep the Law perfectly, that they were in need of a Savior. Thus, instead of being self-righteous and despising others (Luke 18: 9), they would have allowed the Law to be a “schoolmaster” to teach and lead them to keep the spirit of the Law, as well as the letter of it, and to believe on Him as the Messiah, the One sent of God (Gal. 3: 24, 25).

Q What were the Jewish beliefs about the resurrection?

A The inspired Old Testament writers firmly believed in the resurrection. Job expressed intense longing and a firm conviction that he would experience the resurrection awakening (Job 14: 13-15; 19: 25, 26, ASV).

David, speaking prophetically for the Messiah, expresses confidence in the soul coming forth from hell (*sheol* — the unconscious condition in the death state) in the resurrection awakening (Psa. 16: 10, 11; compare Acts 2: 29-34). He exclaims confidently, “I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness” (Psa. 17: 15).

Isaiah manifests strong faith in the resurrection (26:

19). Daniel does also, stating, “Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (12: 2).

Apparently, the writers of the Bible believed that the only hope for a future life was through a resurrection of the dead. The *immortality* of the human soul is nowhere taught in the Old Testament. Rather, it plainly teaches the reverse. See Psa. 78: 50; Ezek. 18: 4, 20; Eccl. 9: 5, 10. It seems evident that in the early days the Jews did not believe in the immortality of the human soul:

The Jewish Encyclopedia (Vol. 6, pp. 564, col. 2, 565) says: The belief that the soul continues its existence after the dissolution of the body is a matter of philosophical or theological speculation rather than of simple faith, and is accordingly nowhere expressly taught in Holy Scripture. . . . The belief in the immortality of the soul came to the Jews from contact with Greek thought and chiefly through the philosophy of Plato, its principal exponent, who was led to it through Orphic and Eleusinian mysteries in which Babylonian and Egyptian views were strangely blended The prevailing rabbinical conception of the future world is that of the world of resurrection.

The belief in the resurrection is expressed in the Jewish liturgy, for example, in the morning prayer *Elohai Neshamah*, in the *Shemoneh ‘Esreh*, and in the funeral services. Maimonides made it the last of his 13 articles of belief: “I firmly believe that there will take place a revival of the dead at a time which will please the Creator, blessed be His name.” Saadia also declared belief in the resurrection to be fundamental.

In the Apostle Paul’s day, the Pharisees affirmed their belief in the resurrection, but the Sadducees claimed that there is no resurrection. Paul’s calling himself a Pharisee and of that lineage and saying that “of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question” had the effect of dividing between the Pharisees and Sadducees in the council of the Jews who were examining him, so that they could not agree to put him to death (Acts 23: 6-10).

Many Jews today stress the importance of living a good life in this present world and de-emphasize the concept of the Messiah, the resurrection, and the world to come. In this respect they resemble the Modernists among professed Christians.

* * *

Knowledge versus Emotion

WE MEET SOME professed Christians who are deep students of God's Word, acute reasoners, Hebrew and Greek scholars, *etc.*, who can explain many things of the Bible, but seem to be rather cold and prosaic, and show little if any fervency of love or deep emotions of Christian experience. On the other hand, we meet some who are quite demonstrative, who attend emotional religious meetings and join with others in "dancing in the spirit," clapping hands, waving arms, moaning and groaning in prayer, shouting, "Hallelujah," "Praise God," *etc.*, but who seem to care little about studying or learning the truth of God's Word, particularly the deeper features. As some, especially new believers, come to learn of these differing kinds of professed Christians, they are quite perplexed as to the proper course for the Christian to pursue.

Satan is an extremist. He would like to divert the Christian from the proper course by causing him to misdevelop in various ways, such as "all head and no heart," or "all heart and no head." And with many he succeeds, getting them to become extremists in one direction or another. The Christian should be moderate, soberminded, should "think soberly" (Rom. 12: 3; Phil. 4: 5), taking heed both unto *himself* and unto the *doctrine* (1 Tim. 4: 16), continuing "in faith, and love, and holiness, with sobriety of mind" (1 Tim. 2: 15 – *Diaglott*).

On the one hand, some may be gifted with the power of oratory, be able to understand mysteries and have much knowledge, but if they neglect to grow in the graces of the Spirit, especially love, in God's estimation they are "nothing" (1 Cor. 13: 2). On the other hand, some may manifest much emotionalism, and may even "leap up and down at the altar" (1 Kings 18: 26 – margin), draw nigh unto the Lord with their mouth and honor Him with their lips, and yet not have their mind and heart affections truly centered on Him and His Word enough to want to learn His purpose, plan and will for them. These therefore worship Him in vain, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men (Matt. 15: 8, 9), resenting and refusing to study carefully the truth of God's Word, especially the deeper features, when called to their attention. These likewise are displeasing to the Lord.

God does not desire us to remain weak and undeveloped in knowledge (1 Cor. 13: 11; 14: 20; Eph. 4: 13, 14; Col. 1: 9, 10; Heb. 5: 12-14; 6: 1, 2). He is very pleased with our growth in knowledge of His Word and plan. We are exhorted to search the Scriptures daily, to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Tim. 2: 15). "Incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear [reverence] of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God; for the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth [the Bible, through which He speaks] cometh knowledge and understanding" (Prov. 2: 2-6; comp. 3: 13-18; 4: 4-9; James 1: 5, 6). From these and other Scriptures we see that knowledge is essential; it is not to be despised.

John Wesley did not neglect growth in knowledge, but many others of his day despised knowledge, and seemed to take pride in their ignorance, even as some do today. One day the scholarly Wesley received a letter from a disgruntled member of an audience that he had addressed. The writer said: "The Lord has directed me to write you and tell you that while you know both Greek and Hebrew, He can do without your book larnin'."

"Your letter received," Wesley replied to his critic, "And I may say it was superfluous, as I already knew that the Lord could do without my larnin'. While the Lord does not direct me to tell you, yet I wish to say, on my own responsibility, that the Lord does not need your ignorance either."

However, if we are not very careful, our growth in knowledge, though very desirable, is under certain conditions very liable to detract from our devotion to the Lord, strange as this may seem. Knowledge and talents, *if not accompanied by the fruits, or graces, of the Spirit*, merely puff up. The Apostle says, "Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up" (1 Cor. 8: 1; 13: 2, 4). But neither is love alone sufficient; it must be accompanied by knowledge. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4: 24). Both are essential.

Love that is degraded to the level of emotionalism, expressing itself merely in an excited state of mind and heart — mental and emotional agitation — may do more harm than good. It seems that "feeling" is one of the Devil's greatest weapons for keeping people from coming to a place of true confidence and assurance in their Christian experience. Satan causes people to seek for "feeling," and thus throws them off the track. Salvation is not by feeling; it is by faith. It is not by seeking an experience, but by accepting a Person. As long as the Devil can keep the inquiring mind and the seeking heart struggling to arrive at a certain emotional experience, perhaps an ecstasy, an emotional thrill, a state of heart and mind uncontrollably swayed by excessive emotion, "dancing in the spirit," *etc.*, rather than repenting, believing, consecrating to God, and studying the truth of God's Word, including its deeper features, so as to know what to believe and accept, in order to be made free and to be sanctified (John 8: 32; 17: 17), just so long he can keep that soul in darkness, measurably blinded to the marvelous light of God's Word (1 Pet. 2: 9).

Proper emotion, of course, has its proper place in the Christian life and is essential to it. Every Christian must have heart-felt religion and a true experience of personal salvation. The soul that never mounts upon the wings of holy and fervent emotion, that is never stirred to its depths by a sense of the Divine goodness and beneficence and one's relationship to God, has never yet experienced the blessedness of the relation of sonship. A true son of a beloved and approving father naturally experiences the fervor of tender emotion. Especially is this so of a true son of God who recognizes in his Heavenly Father the perfection of every grace, the crowning glory of all excellence, who lives in close communion and fellowship with Him, and who has the constant witness in himself of God's love and approval.

We all have emotions. Every human being is an emotional being. God has given us all the capacity to weep, to laugh, to rejoice, *etc.*; but since no two people are exactly alike, there are many gradations of development and degrees of expression. Some may weep, others may laugh and others sit quietly by, all equally enjoying the same thing. With some there is a marked expression of emotions; with others there is little outward expression though there may be equal feeling. There is a familiar saying that reads, "Still waters run deep." So we must be careful not to judge others. Every Christian, whether more expressive or less expressive, should seek to be developed both in the knowledge of the truth and in the spirit of the truth — in righteousness and holiness.

— Adapted from *The Bible Standard*, May 1962, pp. 38, 39

announcements

MEMORIAL DATE FOR 2002

Our Lord's Memorial falls on Tuesday, March 26, after 6:00 p.m. This is calculated as follows (all times Universal Time, or Greenwich Mean Time): The vernal equinox is on March 20, 7:17 p.m.; the new moon nearest this equinox is on March 14, 2:03 a.m.; add to this, 2 hours 21 minutes to get Jerusalem time = 4:24 a.m.; so Nisan 1 is from 6:00 p.m. March 13, to 6:00 p.m. March 14; Nisan 14 begins 13 full days later, on Tuesday, March 26, 6:00 p.m., ending Wednesday, March 27, 6:00 p.m. May God bless all His consecrated people in this connection. We will be pleased to receive reports of your commemoration.

GENERAL CONVENTIONS FOR 2002

At-a-glance (in alphabetical order)

France: March 31-April 1; July 26-28 (*revised dates*); November 2, 3

Nigeria: *Umunkiri*, June 28-30; *Osusu Amukwa*, September 29; *Abia State*, Aba, November 22-24; *Akwab Ibom State*, Nduetong Oku, November 23-25

Poland: *Poznan*, May 3-5; *Lublin*, July 12-14; *Rzeszow*, July 15-17; *Wroclaw* July 19-21; *Bydgoszcz*, July 22-24; *Katowice*, August 16-18

United Kingdom: *Hyde*, August 2-4

United States: Florida, March 15-17; Massachusetts, April 19-21; Michigan, May 25-27; Pennsylvania, July 4-7; Ohio, August — *dates to be announced*; Illinois, October 4-6; Tulsa, November 8-10

Details

United States

Florida, March 15-17 (Friday-Sunday)

Site: The Days Inn, 1031 S. First St., Jacksonville Beach, Fla., 32250; Telephone: (800) 321-2037 *Rates and Reservations:* \$72.00 for 1-4 guests, plus \$1.00 for an in-room safe (for valuables); rates are taxed at 13%. Reservations may be made directly with the hotel or through Mrs. Beverly Blaine (Class Secretary), 3569 Anderson Drive, Ormond Beach, Fla. 32176; telephone (386) 441-9836.

Massachusetts, April 19-21 (Fri.-Sun.):

Site: Holiday Inn, 245 Whiting Farms Road, Holyoke, MA 01040; tel.: (413) 534-3311 *Rates and Reservations:* \$78.98 (tax included), for 1-2 people; meals \$11.95 (noon) and \$9.95 (evening) on a donation basis. (A hospitality room will be available for anyone needing a place to rest during the day.) Reservations at group rate guaranteed only until March 21. Full payment must accompany reservation; checks payable to "Holiday Inn." Reservations may be made not later than March 21, through Bro. Gunar and Sr. Lucy Vanags, 668 E. St. North, Suffield, CT 06078

(tel.: (860) 668-0701; e-mail: gunluce@earthlink.net); or with the hotel (credit cards accepted). *You must mention the LHMM convention to get the special rate.*

SERVICES BY VISITING MINISTERS

Carl W. Seebald

Suspended until further notice due to Bro. Seebald's temporary ill-health.

Gerald Herzig

Florida Convention, March 15-17

Ralph Herzig

New Haven, Connecticut, March 3; Florida Convention, March 15-17; Springfield, Mass., June 2

Robert Herzig

Auburn, Mass., March 10; Springfield, Mass., April 7; Boston Mass., June 16

Jan Wojnar

New Haven, Connecticut, May 19; Pittsfield, Mass., June 9

Richard Blaine

Florida Convention, March 15-17; Cleveland, Georgia, May 18; Marietta, Georgia, May 19

John Treble

Florida Convention, March 15-17

Leon Snyder

March: Cincinnati, Ohio, 10, Iuka, Miss., 11; Booneville, Miss., 12; Florida Convention, 15-17; *April:* Ft. Lauderdale, 3; Sebring, Fla., 4; Keystone Heights, Fla., 7; Waycross, Georgia, 9, 10; Marietta, Georgia, 13, 14; Sand Ridge, West Virginia, 16; Mass. Convention, 19-21; Lenox, Mass., 23, 24; Springfield, Mass., 27, 28; Cambridge Springs, Penn., 30; *May:* Akron, Ohio, 1; *June:* Muskegon, Michigan, 15

Evangelists' Services

Tom Cimbur, Colorado North, May 4, 5

Robert Branconnier, Boston, Mass., March 24; Auburn, Mass., May 12

Harry Hammer, Muskegon, Michigan, April 6, Grand Rapids, Michigan, April 7; Minneapolis, June 8, 9

Jon Hanning, Erie, Penn., March 9, 10; Cleveland, Georgia, March 20; Beechgrove, Tenn., March 23; Sand Ridge, West Virginia, May 11, 12

Don Lewis, Chicago, April 13, 14

David Lounsbury, New York City, April 28

Harold Solomon, Boston, Mass., May 26

Robert Steenrod, Derry, Penn., April 6, 7; Beechgrove, Tenn., June 8, 9

Edward Tomkiewicz, Minneapolis, March 23, 24