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"The Lamb opened the seventh seal." "Ye have approached Mount Zion, and the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem. . . See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh . . . saying . . . 'Yet once more I shake not the earth only but also heaven' . . . Wherefore, receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear." "Christ being come an High Priest . . . by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle . . . obtained eternal deliverance."—Rev. 8: 1; Heb. 12: 22, 25, 26, 28; 9: 11, 12.

THE MINISTRY OF EVIL

— Psa. 130 —

This article is taken from Watch Tower Reprints, pp. 1759-1760 [Jan. 1895]. Format, spellings, and style have been altered to match current practice, and several obscure words have been replaced. The article otherwise stands as it appears in the Reprints.

It was written with the New Creation in mind and should be read in that light and in the context of the times.

THE LIFE OF EVERY HUMAN BEING has its lights and shadows, its seasons of joy and its depths of sorrow. These make up the warp and woof of experience, and the web of character that flows from the active loom of life will be fine and beautiful, or coarse and homely, according to the skill and carefulness with which the individual appropriates and weaves into it the threads of experience. In every life, under the present reign of sin and evil, the somber shades predominate; and to such an extent that the Scriptures aptly describe humanity in its present condition as a “groaning creation.” Nor is the Christian exempt from these conditions that are upon the whole world; for “we also groan within ourselves, waiting for deliverance” (Rom. 8: 22, 23).


But while we are waiting for the deliverance, the daily experiences of life have a most important mission to us, and the manner in which we receive and use them should be a matter of deepest concern to us; for, according to the use we make of them, each day's prosperity or adversity and trial bears to us a blessing or a curse. Those experiences which we are accustomed to regard as prosperous often have in them subtle dangers. If wealth increase or friends multiply, how almost imperceptibly the heart finds its satisfaction in earthly things; but, on the other hand, when the keen edge of sorrow and disappointment are felt, when riches fail, and friends forsake, and enemies take up a reproach against us, the natural temptation is to despondency and despair.

THE CHRISTIAN'S BATTLE

Just here is an important part of the great battle of the Christian's life. He must fight the natural tendencies of the old nature and confidently claim and anticipate the victory in the strength of the great Captain of his salvation. He must not succumb to the flattering and deceptive influences of prosperity, nor faint under the burdens of adversity. He must not allow the trials of life to sour and harden his disposition, to make him morose, or surly, or bitter, or unkind. Nor may he allow pride or ostentation or self-righteousness to grow and feed upon the temporal good things which the Lord's providence has granted him to test his faithfulness as a steward.

Sorrows indeed may, and often will, come in like a flood, but the Lord is our helper in all these things. The soul that has never known the discipline of sorrow and trouble has never yet learned the preciousness of the Lord's love and helpfulness. It is in seasons of overwhelming sorrow, when we draw near to the Lord, that He draws specially near to us. So the Psalmist found it, when, in deep affliction, he cried to the Lord and reasoned of his righteousness, saying, “Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.” Feeling his own shortcomings, and longing for full deliverance from every imperfection, and prophesying the bountiful provisions of the Divine plan of salvation through Christ, he adds, “If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities [imputing them to us], O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared [reverenced].”

How blessed are such assurances when the soul is painfully conscious of its infirmities and of its inability to measure up to the perfect law of righteousness. When the



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Free from all sects, parties, organizations, and creeds of men, but bound to God as it understands His Word, this magazine stands for —

- The defense of the Parousia Truth, given by the Lord through “that Servant,” as basic for all further development of the Truth;
- The defense of the arrangements, charter and will given by the Lord through “that Servant,” as binding on controlling corporations and associations among Truth people; and for
- The exposition and defense of the unfolding Epiphany-Basileia Truth, as meat in due season for the Lord's people, as He is pleased to provide it.

heart is true and loyal, God does not mark our infirmities in a record against us. They are not imputed to us, but are freely forgiven through Christ in whose merit we trust and whose righteousness is our glorious dress — arrayed in which we may come with humble boldness, even into the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

If God thus ignores the infirmities of our flesh and receives and communes with us as new creatures in Christ, his children should also so regard one another, considering not, and charging not against each other, the infirmities of the flesh, which all humbly confess and by the grace of God strive daily to overcome. “If God be for us, who can be against us?” The case is different, however, when the infirmities of the flesh are cultivated, indulged and justified that the errors may be continued. Then, indeed, they are charged against us, and if we do not speedily “judge ourselves,” the Lord will judge and chasten us (1 Cor. 11: 31, 32).

“I wait for the Lord,” the Psalmist continues, “my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning.” How necessary is this patient *waiting* for the Lord! In the midst of cares, perplexities, difficulties and infirmities we may remember that all the jarring discords of life are working together for good to them that love the Lord, to the called according to His purpose. But for the consummation of this purpose of God toward us we must “wait,” and, while waiting patiently, endure hardness as good soldiers. “Trust in the Lord, and *wait patiently* for him, and he will bring it to pass.”

Time is an important element in all God’s plans: we are not, therefore, to be disappointed when the test of endurance is applied while the blessings we crave tarry long. God took time to frame the world and to fit it for human habitation; time (6,000 years) to give the world its necessary experience with evil; time (4,000 years) to prepare for the advent of Christ as the world’s Redeemer; time (2,000 years) for the preparation of the Church to share in His glorious reign; and time must be allowed for the shaping and adjusting of the individual affairs of all his people. God has not forgotten when the answers to our prayers seem to tarry long. He who heeds the sparrow’s fall and numbers the very hairs of our heads is not indifferent to the faintest call or the smallest necessity of his humblest child. O, how blessed is the realization of such care over us.

“. . . THEY THAT WATCH FOR THE MORNING”

“My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the Morning; I say more than they that watch for the Morning.” The “brethren,” are not in darkness respecting the dawn of the Millennial Morning, because taught thereof by the Comforter (See 1 Thes. 5: 4), and because to their eyes of faith the Day Star (the Day-bringer — Christ) has already appeared, and they rejoice in the inspired testimony

that although “weeping may endure for the night [of sin’s predominance] joy cometh in the Morning” of the great day of the Lord. And as the dawn of the new day, “the day of Christ,” becomes more and more distinct, many besides the “brethren” can and do see signs that “the night is far spent and the day is at hand”; and by and by, notwithstanding the dark clouds and terrible storm of trouble that will temporarily hide the signs of morning from them, all the world — even the still sleeping nominal church — will awake to the fact that “The morn at last is breaking.”

But many of those who are now watching for the Morning from the standpoint of Socialism, Nationalism, *etc.*, are not waiting for the Lord — in fact, they do not know the Lord, His character and His Kingdom having been so sadly misrepresented by those who claimed to be His mouthpieces. They rejoice in the Morning, because it ushers in the golden age of human equality, general education, decreased toil, and increased privileges, comforts and luxuries. “God is not in all their thoughts,” when they look for the Morning. Looking from a more or less selfish standpoint unguided by the Divine revelation — for no man knoweth the mind of God save he who has the spirit of God (1 Cor. 2: 11, 12) — they fail to see the real object and chief characteristic of the coming age of blessing, and are merely championing the interests of the masses as against the present special advantages of the wealthy.

TRIAL FOR ETERNAL LIFE COMING

They see not the greatest blessings of the dawning day — that with earthly comforts and privileges it will bring the great blessing of a trial for everlasting life — that it will be the world’s Judgment Day, to determine who, under those favorable conditions, will develop characters in harmony with God’s character.

But with the “brethren” it is different. While they appreciate the coming earthly blessings none the less, but the more intelligently, the Lord, His character and the work which will be accomplished for men by the great Physician — as Prophet, Priest and King — these more weighty and more valuable considerations outweigh by far the earthly favors which will attend His Kingdom’s rule. Yes, the “brethren” wait for the Lord Himself, longing to see the King in his beauty — the fairest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely. Yes, truly *our* souls “wait for the Lord *more* than they that wait for the Morning.”

Then let all the Israel of God hope in the Lord (verses 7, 8), for with the Lord there is mercy; mercy not only in dealing with our infirmities, but also in shielding from overwhelming trials and in granting grace to help in every time of need — to those who abide in the Vine by faith and obedience. “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits” (Psa. 103: 2).

THE GOLDEN WEDGE OF OPHIR

Thoughts on Isa. 13: 11-13

This article is based on an edited transcript of a discourse originally presented in 1986 by Pilgrim Bro. H.W. Roberts, our representative in Britain.

GOLD IS A HEAVY, yellow, metallic element (Chem. symbol *Au*) that occurs in the free state (uncontaminated) in nature. It is malleable, ductile, not liable to corrosion, and lends itself easily to cutting, shaping, and burnishing. Gold is held to be precious among all civilized nations, and has been so from earliest Biblical times, when it was to be found in Havilah (Gen. 2: 11, 12). It was later found in Sheba (1 Kings 10: 2; Psa. 72: 15) and in Ophir (1 Kings 22: 48; 2 Chron. 8: 18).

Such places cannot now be geographically identified with certainty, but as the references indicate, not only were they well separated, but some areas produced a finer, purer, and therefore more valuable form of gold than others. "Gold of Ophir" was apparently a synonym for the finest gold (*Temple Bible Dictionary*). In Isa. 13: 12, the English and American Revised Versions speak of "the pure gold of Ophir" (rendered "the golden wedge of Ophir" in the King James Version). Other Old Testament writings also, by specifying "gold of Ophir," indicate that it was the finest — more pure and desirable than all others.

Gold was normally stored and traded in wedge-shaped bars or "tongues," an example of which has been found in the residual mound of the very ancient, ruined Canaanite town of Gezer. It was the theft of valuables including just such a "wedge" as this, weighing fifty shekels, which occasioned the defeat of Israel and the downfall of Achan in Joshua's first battle against the city of Ai (Josh. 7: 1-26).

The acquisition of gold has always appealed to the worldly-wise, partly for its use in ostentatious personal adornment, partly as a standard of value and means of exchange, and partly because its high value-to-weight ratio provides a convenient means of storing or trading in great riches.

THE TWIN SOLICITUDES OF THE FALLEN RACE
Apart from riches, another great desire, common to all mankind, has been for lasting life and health. These two great solicitudes, the acquisition of great wealth and of an indefinitely prolonged and healthy life — really aimed at overcoming the effects of the curse (see Gen. 3: 17-19) — have led even the most intelligent of men to search for easy answers. They dreamed of a physical substance with magical properties that would enable them both to transmute base metals into gold (the Philosopher's Stone), and to prolong human life indefinitely (the Elixir of Life). The study of these things, known as "Alchemy," has attracted man from earliest times. Egyptian, Greek, and later Arabic records tell

of the practice of alchemy among nations of antiquity, and it features prominently in the work of some of the deepest thinkers of Medieval and early Reformation times.

Writings from Dark-age Europe and early Reformation times show that learned men, searching for that elusive Philosopher's Stone, believed that when reduced to a powder and mixed with molten iron, it had the power to change that base metal into gold. Alternatively, if imbibed with certain other substances it would, as the Elixir of Life (Arabic *al-akisir*), reward the drinker with eternal life and youth. Countless ingredients and potions were tried and discarded in centuries of such experimentation. Many concoctions were bizarre, and many experiments were foolhardy, but all were fruitless. Rather than promoting life and health, no doubt most of them had the opposite effect!

Life, Youth, and Riches — never to want and never to grow old and die — have been desired by all men since ever those perfect gifts, bestowed on humankind by a benevolent Creator in Eden, were lost by reason of the Fall (James 1: 17). To those acquainted with the Divine Plan of the Ages it is clear that this search for a panacea for all sickness and want by means of Alchemy, is really an endeavor to achieve the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom without undergoing its painful but necessary corrective features. However, although it is written, "The desire of all nations shall come" (Hag. 2: 7), it will come neither by man's intelligence nor on his terms.

JEHOVAH IS THE GREAT ALCHEMIST

Jehovah, our God, is the great and only true Alchemist. His skill is shown in His transforming members of the Church, the Body of Christ, from earthly, sinful creatures with corruptible flesh, into heavenly, spiritual creatures having the Divine nature and bodies that are incorruptible (1 Cor. 15: 35-50; 1 Pet. 1: 3, 4, 22, 23).

In the Divine Alchemy, what did God use as His symbolic Philosopher's Stone? How did He concoct His Elixir of Life? Love was the greatest thing. This, together with two other ingredients, Faith and Hope, specified in 1 Cor. 13: 13, was stirred up with the Providences of God, and as the consecrated drank, it strengthened them in the sacrifice of their earthly bodies, enabling them to develop those holy affections and wonderful graces of character required by the new spirit nature to which they were begotten (2 Cor. 5: 17; Gal. 6: 14, 15).

The final act of God in this transmutation process was

the resurrection of each member of the “body” to a heavenly plane of being — the glory of the Divine Nature.

But God’s alchemy will go further than this, for in our text we read His promise. “I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the fine gold of Ophir.” This indicates another fundamental change, but this time applied to the remainder of mankind, and without the creature undergoing a change from his earthly, fleshly nature. Since the Fall, when the original Divine image and likeness (Gen. 1: 26) was lost by Adam and Eve, all their descendants have become more and more unlike their Creator (Eccl. 7: 29). In our day, after more than six thousand years of the in-breeding of sin (Psa. 51: 5) and the intensification of its disastrous consequences, that original resemblance is barely recognizable in even the finest of our race; and in some, not at all. There is an immense disparity, now, between the estate of fallen man and that of the perfect Adam.

Nevertheless God’s Word declares that He will make a man (a member of the race in general, not a particular man) “more rare than fine gold, and a common man than pure gold of Ophir” (*Young’s Literal Translation*). In other words, He will restore man to that “image and likeness” of God and His dear Son (the “us” and “our” of Gen. 1: 26) which was, right from the time of man’s creation, a Divinely set, universal and eternal standard below which no member of the human race would be permitted to live everlastingly (Acts 3: 19-23).

GOD’S ALCHEMY FOR MANKIND

What will be necessary to achieve such a transformation in man? First of all, a complete change of heart, no less. A change must come to that cold, stony, and unyielding heart condition which, from the time of Cain’s intransigence (Gen. 4: 3-12), has resisted calls to repentance and been largely deaf to the voice of conscience. It must be transformed into a warm, loving, and sympathetic heart condition that responds immediately to the principles emanating from Divine justice, wisdom, and love.

Such a change as this far transcends the hopes and aims of even the most sanguine of this world’s well-meaning reformers. Most of them have preferred to apply their own earthy and pragmatic means and principles to the problems associated with man’s fallen estate, rather than adopt those high moral and religious principles of absolute justice and perfect love that are set before us in the Word of God (Isa. 55: 8, 9). The question arises: what, in this instance, will be the symbolic Philosopher’s Stone? What agency will God use to achieve such a high and (to the worldly mind) such an improbable, objective?

Strange to say, in this first stage of God’s alchemy, the primary ingredient of a healing medicine for this sin-

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stricken world is *trouble*: not so much the trouble that mankind has known and lived through since the Fall, severe though it has been from time to time, nor yet the trouble among the nations of Christendom during the Gospel Age, for “that is but the beginning of the trouble” (Mark 13: 7-13, *Moffat*), but a special trouble. In Dan. 12: 1 and Matt. 24: 21 we read of it as a particular Time of Trouble such as the world has never known, nor ever shall again. Elsewhere the Bible presents it in most awesome and portentous terms, likening it to a great whirlwind (Prov. 1: 27; Isa. 5: 28; 66: 15; Jer. 25: 32; 30: 23; Hos. 8: 7; Nahum 1: 1-3). This particular, unprecedented Time of Trouble, the symbolic whirlwind of prophecy, is gathering force around us now.

As further ingredients of this initial stage of God’s alchemy, all of mankind’s instincts, feelings, and reasoning powers are also being thrown into the great melting pot of this Time of Trouble, giving rise to frustration, fear, anger, and desperation, and causing the day to “burn as an oven” (Mal. 4: 1). All the evils that have marred the course of mankind from the founding of “this present evil world,” the social, political, and religious order which has developed since the world-wide disaster of the Noachic flood (2 Pet. 3: 5-7), are being brought to light. In the further and even greater waves of trouble which lie ahead, that world-order will be wrecked, and the very order of nature itself — already showing signs of disruption in consequence of man’s carelessness and greed — will be in danger of sustaining irreparable damage. These conditions are prophetically described in Isa. 24: 1-6.

PRESENT WORLD CONDITIONS

The immensity of the power made available by modern energy-sources, linked to the miniaturization of weapons and the globalization of political activism, has brought new dangers of unimaginable proportions. Fear, occasioned by the unprecedented immediacy of threats to even the most powerful of nations, has precipitated crises in world affairs, and the need to make hasty decisions, which may unleash a holocaust, has moved increasingly nervous world leaders to

set up a network of international "hotlines." By this means, they seek to prevent misunderstandings which could automatically launch a "defensive" reaction which could not be withdrawn, with truly awful results.

In the scientific world the amazing advances in knowledge (prophesied in Dan. 12: 4) have given rise to new situations in society, challenging those beliefs and behavioral norms that have traditionally underpinned all forms of ordered society. Developments in medical and agricultural science in particular have seen the very principles and stuff of life itself searched out as never before, often by those who are commercially, rather than morally — or even medically — motivated. As a case in point, current genetic experimentation is giving rise to moral, legal and other arguments and dilemmas that are causing grave misgivings among thinking people. Governments are vainly seeking to introduce legislation to control the situation, but the power of commercial and financial interests in huge, international conglomerates, is too strong. Politicians, ostensibly the people's representatives, are all too often either washed along with the tide of money-making and power brokering, or they are sidelined and rendered ineffectual. The inference of the phrase, "money talks," is a universal truism under present conditions.

If we now look at the effect of these things on people in general — especially the young — we find a growing concern, and a spirit of skepticism, cynicism, and anarchic disobedience to that kind of law and order which has permitted, and in many ways has encouraged, the present situation. This rising tide of objection and militant protest is part of the symbolic whirlwind of prophecy in which all the primary interest-groups of this world — Church, State, Aristocracy, Capital, and Labor — are disastrously involved. It appears that the situation is rapidly moving out of control. Following the weakening effects upon the nations of two world wars, the whirlwind of trouble is mounting toward its climax, the great crash, the collapse of this present order of affairs.

THE AFTERMATH

Try to picture the condition of the world as the great whirlwind subsides. Consider the last, great waves of trouble washing over the remainder of a battered, chastened, and frightened humanity. In the wake of the destruction of all the institutions that were set up by fallen men to ward off the worst effects of the Fall, will come privation, disease, and despair on every hand. Think of the human race, terribly depleted in numbers (Isa. 24: 6), desperate and fearful (Luke 21: 26), shocked in mind at what they see, and appalled at the results of what they have done, with the extinction of all life on this planet a distinct possibility (Matt. 24: 22; Mark 13: 20). The mournful words of Isa. 24: 1-6, 17-21 do not overstate the case; the

toughest, hardest, most self-confident of men will be reduced to helpless fear when they see the fulfilling of the dire warnings and terrible predictions that appear in the prophetic Word of God.

At such a time, will mankind turn any more to political parties? Or to religious leaders, social reformers, eminent worldly persons, militarists? Will they consult meditationists, philosophers, or scientists? Will they resort to conservationists, "groupies," or New Age "hippies?" *No!* For all of these will have had their day, been given their opportunity, and their absolute failure and uselessness will be apparent to all. The world, on the brink of ultimate disaster will have reached its wits' end (Psa. 107: 27).

And think: who, at that time of worldwide human despair will be able to see the amazing potential and the wonderful future of humankind? Those alone who believe the prophecies of God. And who, alone, will have the power and wisdom to stop, and to redirect a world that is on the brink of total disaster? Who, and who alone, will have the authority to say to the raging elements of that storm of trouble, "Peace, be still"? There is but One.

THE TRUE AND ONLY PANACEA

When we turn to Isaiah 13: 11-13 we read that God, "will make a man more precious than fine gold" and that He will cause the ordinary human being to become more rare and desirable than "the golden wedge of Ophir." At present, man is more like an old, rusted, and misshapen lump of low-grade iron ore than the choice and pure gold of Ophir! But God the Alchemist declares emphatically, "I will change him!"

Let us then see the processes and agencies by which God purposes to achieve this objective. Implicit in God's promise are the assurances, "Then the eyes of the [spiritually and morally] blind shall be opened, and the ears of the [spiritually] deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man [limping in conduct] leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb [who praised not God] sing" (Isa. 35: 5, 6). "I will cause each individual to see his neighbor with such clarity, understanding and benevolence as never before. I will make of man a creature to be protected and cared for by all of his fellows, to be loved with an intense and appreciative love, to be fought for, prayed for, wept over, rejoiced over, *cherished!* I will make of him a precious, rare, and exquisite being designed to grace this planet Earth, and a worthy neighbor to every other sentient being in all My universe; and that, for all eternity. Truly, I will open the eyes of the blind!"

Now, a question arises. In view of mankind's refractory nature and his historic recalcitrance against all of God's natural and revealed religious promptings, why would God want to do that? Why should He maintain this high purpose for mankind, having endured 6,000 years of disobedience, opposition, misrepresentation, and vilifica-

tion? Why has He accepted the pain and sorrow of observing all the evil consequences of man's continual choosing of sin and degradation? Why did He, the Mighty God, stoop to plead with fallen men to turn from their wickedness? Why did He permit His beloved Son Jesus to die at the hand of those He was sent to save? And further still — why such an ignominious death? Why did He stand by, seemingly inactive, when His suffering Son cried out on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And why has He permitted since that day the implacable, cruel persecution of those followers of Jesus who have sought only to serve Him, God, in spirit and in truth? Why, in spite of all these things, does God still pursue His purpose to uplift and to *ble*ss, and *ble*ss, and *ble*ss mankind beyond their present mental capacity to conceive?

A GOLDEN PROSPECT

Even as David mused, there must be something in the Divine Wisdom that passes our understanding! "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Psa. 8: 4). Just what is there in man — at present so often arrogant, drunken, vicious, avaricious, cruel, lustful, warlike, faithless, hopeless, despairing, and always physically ailing and dying — that can be made *finer than purest gold*? What is it that God sees, but that the World cannot see?

Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that still prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. . . . The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance.

— *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, pp. 191, 192

That is what God sees!

Now, let us open our eyes again. Have we been mistaken? No — there is no mistake. We see again the "scenes of misery and woe"; the graveyards, the hospitals and prisons, famine, civil wars and genocide, forced labor — including that of children, decay and crime-ridden streets in the richest cities of the world, the globally creeping horror of AIDS and other frightful diseases, and so forth. We see also, in the most civilized of nations, the continuing development of biological, chemical, and atomic weapons of almost unimaginable destructive power with delivery systems against which there appears to be no defense. These things add massively and needlessly to the ordinary sufferings already associated with

Having thus experienced in reality the world that now is, and being enabled to see by faith the world that is yet to be, how stark the difference is! Yet we who are of "the faith of Abraham," like Abraham himself, stagger not at the promises of God

living and dying in "this present evil world" (Gal. 1: 4).

As we look again among the leaders of our kind for help, we see the implacable revolutionary and the blinkered reactionary, both rejecting reasoned argument and cooperative reform. They turn, rather, to the hate-politics of extremist political dogma, the former to violent demonstration and mounting anarchy; the latter to harsh economic control and repressive law. Elsewhere, we see the present strong challenge by libertarian behaviorists to all moral restraints, with increasingly depraved standards becoming acceptable in public life. We see hedonistic nations and individuals living carelessly on credit, piling up debts that no subsequent generation will ever be able to repay — "scenes of misery and woe" indeed! This is in spite of "the good life" that a few enjoy for a season, occupying privileged situations and willingly blind to the evils around them. The plain truth is that dying is with all, and death awaits all (Eccl. 9: 5).

Having thus experienced in reality the world that now is, and being enabled to see by faith the world that is yet to be, how stark the difference is! Yet we who are of "the faith of Abraham," like Abraham himself, stagger not at the promises of God (Rom. 4: 16, 20). On the contrary, we believe them! In studying the "signs of the times" we are peering through the dust and debris of a rising whirlwind. We hear the howling winds of war and the thunderclaps of controversy rolling and echoing around the symbolic heavens (among revolutionaries and rulers); we feel the symbolic earth shake; we see the torrential rain and driving hail of Truth (Isa. 28: 17) from which mankind is fruitlessly seeking shelter, and in these things we recognize that we are living in the "great and very terrible" day of the Lord (Joel 2: 11).

TRUE CHURCH A RESTRAINING INFLUENCE

Study of Parousia and Epiphany truths has revealed to us that the Church, the primary "salt" of Matt. 5: 13, has throughout the Gospel Age done its work, and one side-effect of that work has been a measurable uplifting of an otherwise degenerating world. As a consequence of this the world was not abandoned to sink into total depravity, but has been reserved "unto the day of judgment" — the Millennial Age (2 Pet. 2: 9).

This uplifting of the unjustified world of mankind was in large measure an indirect result of the preaching of stewardship truths (trumpetings) by the Star Members during the Gospel Age, being accomplished in the corrective features (silver chargers) associated with the offerings of the Gospel Age Princes in support of those Stewardship Truths. These corrective features, as Bro. Johnson shows (E8 pp. 393, 394), were in part directed to strongly rebuking and correcting evils in civil society.

But now that work is done, and the last member of the Little Flock has finished his course. No longer to the same degree do the reproofs, corrections, and ethical teachings of the Bible find their way into the consciousness of a sin-stricken world. As the world plunges downward, unchecked in its behavioral slide, the symbolic lightning flashes of truth (of all kinds — political, social, and scientific) reveal a world in turmoil, with shouts of fear and anger heard on all sides.

This confusion, clamor, and trouble is causing many — especially the young — to seek something better than present conditions allow. Yet although they openly challenge flawed principles that were once accepted virtually without question, they have no alternatives to offer. In their impotence, and because they do not know God and His Plan, they become angry, anarchic, and destructive.

THE FALL OF CHRISTENDOM

Christendom was once the hub of the world. On its historic religious base and over many centuries it has built up the defensive walls of intellectualism, industrial power, economic expertise, and financial control. The true nature of these fortifications has been disguised, being “daubed . . . with untempered mortar” of sin and error (Ezek. 13: 10-13). This whole erroneous, multi-faceted arrangement has been foisted upon and accepted by most of the blinded and gullible peoples of Christendom as being the earthly Kingdom of God. This was Satan’s masterpiece!

But through the prophet Isaiah God said, “I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore will I shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.”

Here in the 21st Century a great shaking of the ecclesiastical “heavens” and the social and political “earth” by reason of disaffection and rebellion of the people is causing the whole structure to rock and sway dangerously, precursive to its final collapse; a reduction first by revolution, to rubble; then by anarchy, to dust (Hag. 2: 6; Heb. 12: 26, 27).

This world-wide anarchy, totally destructive of all law and order, will in God’s wisdom really be a setting free of all people from their former confidence in, or oppression by, any of this present evil world’s institutions and leaders. However, without viable alternatives to what they have destroyed, such absolute freedom will soon demonstrate to all an elementary social truth — that virtually any law is better than none. Bereft of all normal lines of communication, institutions, leaders, and services, the world’s plight will be desperate in the extreme. The Bible describes those times in stark, dramatic terms, as a warning that should not have been ignored. Passages such as Psa. 107: 23-31 foretell that even the wisest of men will be at their wits’ end.

Thus will mankind be prepared for the next stage in God’s alchemy. The sheer hopelessness of the situation will prompt each individual to respond positively to the “still small voice” of 1 Kings 19: 12 that will then be heard in the earth. Each one will be free to seize with relief and gratitude the great hope held out to all as they become aware of the terms and promises of the New Covenant, and in this none shall prevent them. God will, at last, bring them to their desired haven (Psa. 107: 30).

The bringing to that haven is neither a short nor necessarily an easy passage. It will be by way of the Highway of Holiness (Isa. 35: 8), with all its refining processes, leading mankind from a heart and mind conformed to an evil regime, to a heart and mind in tune with a universal standard of righteousness. That will be the purpose of the New Covenant, the keeping of which will bring — what the delusion of a physical Philosopher’s Stone and Elixir of Life failed to realize — everlasting life and freedom from want.

The Mediator of that Covenant, the Great Kingly, Priestly Messiah will, as Jehovah’s plenipotentiary, begin the work of establishing His Millennial Kingdom among the then living. After this will come that astounding feature, the opening of graves, and with those who come forth from the tomb the refining process will, we believe, continue methodically, step by step, generation by generation, to a completion. Thus will God, in all the willing and obedient, bring the refining of mankind — symbolic, earthly gold — to its glorious conclusion.

His finished work will again reveal man as he was before the fall in Eden, the “golden wedge of Ophir,” the likeness and image of God, prepared for eternity.

SPRING CONVENTION REPORTS

Florida Convention

Our fourth annual convention in Florida (*photograph opposite*) was held in Jacksonville Beach on March 15-17, with 93 brethren from 15 states attending. Pilgrim Bro. Ralph Herzig from Massachusetts was the Convention Chairman, and Pilgrim Bro. Richard Blaine from Florida and Auxiliary Pilgrim Bro. Leon Snyder from Michigan served as the Assistant Chairmen.

Auxiliary Pilgrim Bro. Gerald Herzig from Florida opened the Convention with the Address of Welcome. The theme of the Convention, as well as the title of its 12-part symposium was "Birds of the Bible." Five discourses were delivered on a variety of subjects.

The Business Session, conducted by Evangelist Bro. Jack Zilch of the Bible House, began with a report from the Executive Trustee, Bro. Bernard Hedman on cassette tape, followed by reports from the following Bible House staff members: Sr. Barbara Hoague, Bro. Herbert Hoague, Bro. Ian Lalite, Sr. Debbie Zilch, and Bro. Jack Zilch. A report on the Web work was given by the joint Webmaster for the U.S., Evangelist Bro. Dan Herzig and Sr. Sue Herzig.

Bro. Blaine conducted the Question Meeting, handling many interesting questions. The Convention's Closing Remarks came from the Chairman, followed by the Love Feast. The brethren voted to send their Christian greetings to all. The general sentiment of the assembly was thankfulness to the Lord for the good spirit which prevailed at the meetings. Everyone enjoyed the beautiful beach surroundings, and the many arrangements made for their comfort. We thank the local ecclesia for their hospitality.

Massachusetts Convention

The convention in Massachusetts was again held in the Holiday Inn in Holyoke on April 19-21. There were 116 brethren from 10 states and two foreign countries (Jamaica and Poland) in attendance. Pilgrim Bro. Ralph Herzig from Massachusetts was the Convention Chairman, his brother, Auxiliary Pilgrim Bro. Robert Herzig, also from Massachusetts, and Auxiliary Pilgrim Bro. Leon Snyder from Michigan, serving as Assistant Chairmen.

Evangelist Bro. Harold Solomon from Massachusetts opened the Convention with the Address of Welcome. The Convention theme and title of its 10-part symposium was "False views of God." Seven discourses were delivered, some dealing with various false views of God, others presenting true views of God and His holy spirit, adding



balance to the subject matter. The brethren appreciated the symposium and discourses, which were presented in a scholarly way, the product of good preparation. After hearing about the many false views of God in circulation, many expressed appreciation in being privileged with a true

knowledge of Him and His Plan. Pilgrim Bro. Carl Seebald delivered the baptismal discourse.

The Executive Trustee and General Editor, Bro. Bernard Hedman, conducted the Business Session. Various members of the Bible House staff were called upon to give reports on the work they do at the Bible House. This included Bro. Herb Hoague, Sr. Debbie Zilch, Evangelist Bro. Jack Zilch, and Sr. Loisann Lounsbury. Evangelist Bro. Dan Herzig and Sr. Sue Herzig again contributed their report on the Web work.

A highlight of this Convention was the baptism of



Bro. Ken Gallagher (*pictured below*) from the Springfield, Massachusetts ecclesia. Bro. Hedman received his confession of faith. Bro. Hedman also conducted the Question Meeting. The Convention's Closing Remarks came from the Chairman, followed by the Love Feast. The brethren (*photograph above*) voted to send their Christian greetings to all. Our thanks go to the local brethren for their help in making the Convention a success.



QUESTION BOX

The following Scriptures speak of the resurrection of Jesus: 1 Cor. 15: 3, 4; 2 Cor. 5: 14, 15. The King James Version (KJV) uses the expression “rose again” in referring to that great event, conveying the impression that He had experienced a previous resurrection. Please explain.

According to *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*, the words “rose again” are translated from the same Greek word *egeiro* (entry number 1453), which means to *waken*, for example, *rouse* from sleep, from sitting or lying, from disease, or from death. Also, to *rouse* from obscurity, inactivity, ruins, or non-existence. Some of the English words translated from *egeiro* include: awake, lift (up), raise (again, up), rear up, (a-) rise (again, up), stand, and take up.

Let us use 1 Cor. 15: 4 as an example. The KJV reads: “And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” Not all translations, however, use the words “rose again” in this verse. The *Diaglott*, for example renders it: “and that he was buried; and that he was raised the third day according to the Scriptures.” The New International Version (NIV) reads: “that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.”

The Scriptures teach that Jesus had a pre-existence on the spirit plane before becoming a human. He did not *die* as a spirit being, but His life principle was transferred to Mary’s womb, in which He was born a human baby nine months later (John 1: 1-3, 14; 8: 58; 17: 5; Phil. 2: 5-8; Heb. 2: 14-17, 17; E15, 39, 40). He died but once, when He was crucified at 33½ years of age. He then rose from the dead on the third day, never to die again (Rev. 1: 18).

The expression “rose again” is apparently an idiomatic expression of the language of the King James Version. This apparent redundancy is also found, for example, in the expression “free gift” in Rom. 5: 16.

From whom was Mohammed, the founder of Islam, descended? Was he a descendent of Ishmael, the son of Abraham and Hagar?

Mohammed (A.D. 570?-632) accepted Ishmael as a true prophet and claimed descent from him. Although one cannot be dogmatic, the historical evidence seems to point to the conclusion that Mohammed did not descend from Ishmael.

Mohammed was from the Hashem family, which were of the powerful Koreish tribe — the predominant tribe in Mecca where Mohammed was born. Although authorities agree that the origin of this tribe is unknown, some say that they claimed descent from Joktan (Gen. 10: 22-30). Joktan had 13 sons which formed the 13 tribes of Arabia (1 Chron. 1: 19-23). Many Biblical maps show

Joktan’s descendants as inhabiting the central and eastern Arabian highlands, where Mecca lies.

Joktan, a descendant of Shem, had an older brother, Peleg. It is from Peleg that Abraham and his son Ishmael are descended from (Gen. 10: 25; 11: 17-27). Therefore, if Mohammed descended from Joktan, he could not have descended from Ishmael.

Ishmael’s descendants are called Arabs. This does not mean, however, that all those who live or have lived in Arabia are descendants of Ishmael, for paragraph two above shows otherwise.

The role of Isaac as the seed of Abraham is largely discredited by the claim of Islam that it was Ishmael who became the son of promise. Therefore, the claim of the Jews to be of the lineage of Isaac does not have value in the eyes of many Muslims. The enmity between the modern Ishmael and Isaac will not be easily dissolved.

Was the robe of Christ’s righteousness worn by the New Creature or the Old Creature?

The New Creature refers to the new spiritual heart, mind, and will that was begotten by God through His Word. This begetting took place immediately after a believer’s consecration. The Old Creature refers to the fallen human being — its sinful, selfish, and worldly heart, mind, will, and body. The robe of Christ’s righteousness refers to the perfect human merit of Christ, which during the Gospel Age has been imputed to the believer, so that he may have a standing before God. For members of the Little Flock, it was also referred to as their wedding garment.

From one standpoint, we could say that the New Creature did not need the robe, since the New Creature — its new heart, mind, and will — never sinned. However, until the New Creature received its new Divine body in the First Resurrection, it had the fallen fleshly body as its body, and it was this body that needed to be covered with the robe of Christ’s righteousness.

The Old Creature did not need the robe, since God was not dealing with them as Old Creatures: “Old things have passed away; behold all things have become new” (2 Cor. 5: 17). The fleshly will, being reckonedly put to death, had no right to use the fleshly body for its own purposes. The fleshly body had become a servant of the New Creature, to be used in the Lord’s service: “Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6: 11). (See Reprints 4761; *What Pastor Russell Said*, p. 604.)

1 John 2: 18 reads, "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." What does the expression "last time" mean?

The word *time* in the *King James Version* is not translated properly. It should be translated *hour* instead. The Greek word from which *time* in this verse is taken is *hora* (entry number 5610 in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*). According to Strong's, *hora* can be used to refer to either a literal or a figurative *hour*. If used figuratively, it can refer to an instant, a day, or a season, either short or long.

An example of the word *hora* translated properly is found in John 5: 28: "Marvel not at this: for the *hour* is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear

his voice." In this verse, *hour* refers to the Millennial Age, the day of general resurrection, when all shall be given an opportunity to gain everlasting life. In 1 John 2: 18, the "last time" or "last hour" apparently refers to the Gospel Age, the last *hour* or Age of the second World, or Dispensation — the first two hours or Ages were the Patriarchal and Jewish Ages. (E17, p. 364, para 2.)

A number of Bible translations render *hora* as *hour* in 1 John 2: 18, however, *The New Testament: A New Translation* by Olaf M. Norlie offers an interesting alternative for the first clause: "My children, it is the *final age of the world*." For this verse, perhaps this translation more properly represents the Scriptural view.

* * *

SUMMARY OF OUR WORK

November 1, 2000 to December 31, 2001

Note: We have changed our fiscal year reporting period from a November 1 to October 31 cycle to a standard calendar year, January to December. The summary following spans 14 months to enable the adjustment to the new reporting cycle to be made. The next summary will cover January 1, 2002 to December 31, 2002.

PILGRIM AND EVANGELISTIC SERVICE

| | |
|---|---------|
| Pilgrims | 10 |
| Auxiliary Pilgrims | 81 |
| Evangelists | 91 |
| Public and semi-public meetings | 526 |
| Attendance | 30,237 |
| Parlor meetings | 1,735 |
| Attendance | 19,856 |
| Miles travelled | 258,196 |

FINANCES

General Fund

Receipts

| | |
|--|------------|
| 1. Gifts, subscriptions, reserve funds, etc. | \$ 609,625 |
| 2. Balance on hand Nov. 1, 2000 | \$ 47,553 |
| 3. Total money available | \$ 657,178 |

General Fund

Expenses

| | |
|---|--------------|
| 4. Pilgrims, Evangelists, conventions | \$100,544.00 |
| 5. Capital expenses, utilities, computers, repairs, improvements, etc | \$226,133.00 |
| 6. Office, repairs, taxes, equipment, advertising, magazine printing, mailing, etc. | \$299,916.00 |
| 7. Total expenses | \$626,593.00 |

| | |
|--|--------------|
| 8. Balance in General Fund Dec. 31, 2001 | \$ 30,585.00 |
|--|--------------|

Book Fund

Receipts

| | |
|--|--------------|
| 1. Gifts, sale of books, etc. | \$ 29,238.00 |
| 2. Balance on hand Nov. 1, 2000 | \$ 26,516.00 |
| 3. Total receipts | \$ 55,754.00 |
| 4. Purchase of bound magazine volumes, books, printing of 50,000 No. 6 booklets, transfers | \$ 39,256.00 |
| 5. Balance in Book Fund Dec. 31, 2001 | \$ 16,498.00 |

Correspondence

| | |
|---|-------|
| Letters and postals received* | 9,976 |
| Letters and postals dispatched* | 8,835 |

Literature Circulated

| | |
|--|-------|
| <i>Present Truth</i> volunteered | 484 |
| <i>Present Truth</i> subscribed/ordered, incl. bound vols. | 6,560 |

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Total | 7,044 |
|-----------------|-------|

| | |
|--|--------|
| <i>Bible Standard, Herald</i> , volunteered | 1,218 |
| <i>Bible Standard</i> subscribed, ordered, incl. bound vols. | 55,013 |

| | |
|-----------------|--------|
| Total | 56,231 |
|-----------------|--------|

| | |
|--|---------|
| <i>Studies in the Scriptures</i> (cloth) | 1,500 |
| Foreign-language volumes and tracts | 101 |
| <i>Epiphany Studies</i> | 123 |
| <i>Photo-Drama of Creation</i> | 52 |
| <i>Life-Death-Hereafter</i> | 135 |
| Hymnals | 210 |
| Manna Books | 257 |
| Poem Books | 100 |
| Booklets (<i>Hell, Spiritism, Tab. Shadows</i>) | 470 |
| JHP, JW, RSV, AI, GT,HUD, PYR, SAT, BA, FOZ, RI, etc.) | 4,728 |
| Indexes | 65 |
| Bound magazine volumes | 65 |
| Other Bible Students books | 394 |
| Others' publications (Bibles, etc.) | 619 |
| Divine Plan mats, charts, Tabernacle, Pyramid charts | 72 |
| Children's books | 55 |
| Bible cassettes, videotapes | 10 |
| Volunteer booklets | 52,399 |
| Leaflet tracts | 200,927 |
| Bereaved and Good News letters | 15,699 |
| Miscellaneous cards, restitution pins | 112 |

Web Work (U.S.)

(January -December, 2001)

| | |
|--|--------|
| Visitors (people paying some attention to content) | 9,635 |
| Visitors per day (average) | 54 |
| Page Views (pages opened and looked at) | 27,748 |
| "Hits" (number of times the site is "clicked" on) | 99,946 |

* Includes first, second, third class, and e-mail.

LETTER BOX

Dear Friends in Christ:

Recently I read the January 2002 issue of *The Bible Standard*, and found the article on “Dispensations” (Epochs, Ages, Worlds) very interesting. As a result, I’d like to order the set of clothbound “Bible Keys” (six volumes). I’d also like two Motto Cards for 2002.

Thank you and bless you in your continued work and ministry in the Lord’s service.

Sincerely,

L.S., New Hampshire, U.S.A.

Dear Bro. Hedman and Bible House brethren:

Loving greetings in Jesus’ name! Thank you so much for the calendar. It was a very pleasant surprise.

The proofreading work for the Epiphany Project has been a source of blessing to us and we feel a very worthwhile project.

All the work you brethren are doing for us is very much appreciated. We like the improved appearance and format of *The Bible Standard* and feel it has made it more appealing to those we have opportunity to pass it on to.

Warm Christian love,

A.H., England

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

My purpose for writing is to share with you the many blessings I received from *The Bible Standard* of January 2002. It is beautiful to look at, but the real blessings are inside the gorgeous cover. For years I have been troubled trying to understand *agape* love — I just couldn’t grasp the concept of what “disinterested” love really is, but when you further defined it as unselfish love, that is, lacking self-interest — or sacrificial love, it all became so much clearer. What a blessing to be better able to understand the love that God and our Lord Jesus have toward us.

Next I want you to know how much I look forward to future articles regarding “Make It Plain Upon Tables.” I hope with all my heart to find further enlightenment about the “closing of the door” and just what to hope for with regard to those consecrating after the closure. Pastor Russell makes everything so very clear up to 1914, but after that, for me, things get pretty confusing. I pray God will bless both you in dispensing “meat in due season” and myself and others who may need a lamp to lighten their way.

Your very first article “Every Valley Shall Be Exalted” also was very clearly written and informative. It

is so good to read how current events are represented in the Scriptures. Thank you, too, for sending the Motto Card for 2002. I have it on my desk and it provides an opportunity for thoughtful contemplation many times throughout the day.

Sincerely,

P.H., Oregon, U.S.A.

The following letter was written to the secretary of one of our ecclesias. We have withheld the writer’s name:

Dear Friend:

I was so thrilled to receive your letter! I’ve often wondered about who were the ones who met in Minnesota, since *The Bible Standard* mentions meetings there. . . . If any [speaker] of the *Laymen’s Home Missionary Movement* come this way, he is more than welcome at our home.

I’ve been praying to the Lord to show me so many things I could not understand in His Book. I’ve been praying and studying for years! I could not see a lot of it. Of course, I was full of all the false creeds and doctrines, and who can understand all these so called “mysteries.” I linked onto your Web site a couple years ago, and ordered all of your *Studies in the Scriptures, etc.* — and what a difference! The Lord opened my understanding so much! Hell, Trinity, God is the Father, Jesus the Son, and they’re not one, but two, *etc., etc.* Praise the Lord!

Many of the books I have not read yet — it takes me very long to read and re-read and study these books (about 2-3 pages a day). Some I’ve had to read 2-3 times over (*Millennium, Tabernacle Shadows*). I guess that is because I’ve been so indoctrinated with false creeds all my life and it is difficult to comprehend the new way. But I can see the Light!

God bless you all,

Gentlemen:

Some time ago I received a copy of *The Restoration of Israel* booklet. Because I have so many things to yet catch up on in both reading and doing, your booklet was set aside. The timing must have come because I felt the need to read as my wife and I had already everything that is written, and we pray for Israel almost daily and the remnant of both “Jew” and “Gentile” yet to come forth.

We have supported the ministry to the Hebrew people for many years but never heard of your ministry. Sorry to say our income is not what it was but we are excited about the work you are doing because we have met many Messianic Christians. We are always glad for their

joy in Jesus and their fellowship with us. We have also been privileged to lead a few to the fulness of their inheritance in Christ.

God bless you,
A.C., North Carolina, U.S.A.

Dear Bro. Hedman and dear Bible House brethren:

My prayers are with you always as the work goes ahead — specially the new area of work with all this modern equipment. May God bless its use and all you dear ones involved.

The brethren here are very happy to meet each week (and sometimes more often) to study the wonderful Truth of God's Word and all look forward to the magazines and messages from Headquarters and elsewhere from time to time. We are thankful, too, that many are able to share in the work of spreading the Truth to others and trust we can continue to do so in the Lord's providence. May God bless you all.

Your loving Sister in His glad service,
E.W., England

Dear Bro. Hedman:

What wonderful messages the January and February *Bible Standards* contain. Messages of the coming earthly kingdom of God with the healing of the nations and the blessed peace we are all longing for!

As I read these articles I thought how wonderful it was to be living in the time when God's plan is made so clear to us. This knowledge does serve to strengthen us and give us comfort and courage in these very troublous days! God bless you and the Bible House family.

With Christian regards,
H.C., Georgia, U.S.A.

Dear Bro. Hedman,

Christian greetings to all, again, thanking you for your response and prayers. It was truly a blessing to go last week to your Web site — the spiritual benefits are tremendous (especially to be able to type in a topic and go to "search" and find really fine and well-researched answers).

Undoubtedly, the accessibility that such a service will grant to so many is sure to have good effect in reaching those of right heart condition. As it is I am still learning of the "Youthful Worthies" and other Epiphany truths, so I'm grateful also for receiving recently *The Present Truth*, as well as the Nov-Dec. edition of *The Bible Standard*. Certainly they are encouraging and spiritually refreshing — I find myself reading my Bible more, and

being invigorated in desire and activity of sharing this good news with others — by whatever means I've time for, and can finance.

Thank you for all your hard work in the Lord's service. I pray for all at the Bible House.

D.O., South Africa

Dear Bro. Hedman,

Greetings. First of all let me say that I am an old-fashioned person so I do not have a computer. So I am writing in the old-fashioned way.

I missed a few issues of *The Bible Standard*. Thanks for reaching out to me to continue my subscription from which I gain so much well-sought-after knowledge. Please find enclosed a check to cover the cost for

Before I close, I have a question. Since most churches preach and teach a fiery hell, what should one do as far as fellowship now that he knows the Truth? Should he continue to associate with such believers? Please send me something on the subject.

Thanks,

A.F., New York, U.S.A.

[*Editor's Response:* As to fellowshiping with those that teach or hold to the doctrine of eternal torment, we believe that it would be preferable to meet and fellowship with those who hold to the Truth on this subject. However, if you live in a location where there is no opportunity to meet with those who share your views, and you have a need for Christian fellowship, we see nothing wrong with occasionally meeting with a local Christian church. You may find a few who are having difficulty accepting this blasphemous doctrine, and might be able to help some out of their difficulty. You should avoid participation in any church activity which promotes non-Biblical teachings.]

* * *

We welcome your letters. We reserve the right to edit all letters received. Our practice is to indicate only the correspondent's initials, except where the writer is an appointee of the Movement. You may submit your letters (for *The Present Truth* or *The Bible Standard* marked "Editorial" to our postal address on the back page, or by e-mail to editorial@biblestandard.com (enter "Letters" in the subject line).

TIMEPIECE

Protestants No Longer

Zion's Watch Tower; November, 1892

Protestants lately seem to be sadly at a loss to account for their name — *Protestant*. They know from history that there was once a wide difference of religious views between the founders of their sects and the Church of Rome. They know of the rack, the prison and the stake; but they wonder why it all was, and think there must have been some great mistake. Papacy declares that she never changes; and so Protestants fancy that they have been misinformed, and are seeking *union* with the very one whose conduct and doctrines their forefathers *protested* against even unto death.

The Congregational National Convention at Minneapolis adopted the following in a resolution on the subject:

“The Roman Catholic body is recognized as a branch of the church of Christ, and the report welcomes the opportunity to co-operate with its members, clergy or laity in the advancement of the cause of Christian truth and Christian morals. The attitude of the Episcopal church coming forward in England and America bearing an olive branch is heartily commended.”

We are glad indeed to believe that the membership of the Church of Rome contains some noble souls, and that as a whole her multitudes are more enlightened than once they were; but we believe the system to be Satan's handiwork, and as really Antichrist as it was when, with greater power, it “wore out the saints of the Most High,” and practiced outward evil, and prospered in it. The same false doctrines still underlie her system; and only opportunity is lacking for the same display of devilish intolerance that during the dark ages marked her pathway with blood.

We respect all decent, honest men as *men*; and whenever we can we shall be glad to do them good, physically and spiritually. But we reserve the titles of fellowship, “Christian” and “Brother,” for those who trust in the Savior and his *one sacrifice* for all. This as much ignores Roman Catholics, who hold to many, *repeated sacrifices for sins* (sacrifices of the Mass), as it does to those who deny any sacrifice.

* * *

IN MEMORIAM

Sr. Sena J. Siplon, Michigan, died on May 9, at 92. She was born on November 17, 1909, in Muskegon, Michigan. For about five years before her death she lived with her daughter, Carol Augustin. In addition to Carol, Sr. Siplon is survived by another daughter, Dorothy, and by three sons, Arthur, Donald, and Robert. There are numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. Sr. Siplon was a frequent visitor to the Bible House in Bro. Jolly's day.

The funeral service was conducted by Bro. David Seebald; about 100 attended.

* * *

In our winter issue we announced the death of **Sr. Bertha Murphy**, Las Vegas, Nevada at the age of 92, on February 21. At the time we went to press we had few details to give. We add them here:

Sr. Murphy was born in Grand Rapids, moving to Las Vegas in 1980. She is survived by her daughters, Lea Murphy, Las Vegas, and Barbara Boots, Chandler, Arizona. There are several grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. The funeral service was conducted by Bro. Leon Snyder. There were 36 attending. Sr. Murphy's favorite hymn was 179, “My Life Flows On in Endless Song.”

May the Lord comfort the hearts of those who have lost these, their loved ones, and encourage them with the happy prospect of reunion in the resurrection.

*What though my joys and comforts die!
The Lord my Saviour liveth;
What though the darkness gather round!
Songs in the night he giveth.
No storm can shake my inmost calm,*

*While to that refuge clinging;
Since Christ is Lord of heav'n and earth,
How can I keep from singing?
— Verse 2, Hymn 179*

PUBLICATIONS

Some of our publications are listed below. Prices for U.S. addresses *only*; others add 10% toward postage. As a courtesy to subscribers, we supply low-cost Bibles, concordances, *etc.*, for which payment is required with order. Please ask for our catalogue.

STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES

Library Edition (Hardbound)

Costs \$13.95 for a 6-volume set. Volume 1 is 1937 edition (reprinted 1960 and 1997), and includes a year's free subscription to *The Bible Standard* (ordinarily \$7.00 a year). Volumes 2 through 6 are the 1937 edition. This is a good-quality hardbound set. Each book has a Scripture index, questions, and notes in the back. Volume 6 has additionally a topical and Scriptural index for all 6 volumes.

Vol. 1, *The Divine Plan of the Ages* (424 pages) \$5.00

Vol. 2, *The Time Is At Hand* (451 pages) \$2.50

Vol. 3, *Thy Kingdom Come* (458 pages) \$2.50

Vol. 4, *The Battle of Armageddon* (709 pages) \$3.00

Vol. 5, *The At-One-Ment Between God and Man* (560 pages) \$2.50

Vol. 6, *The New Creation* (896 pages, with topical index) \$3.00

Complete set (includes year's subscription to The Bible Standard) \$13.95

EPIPHANY STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES

Library Edition (Hardbound)

Vol. 1, *God* (547 pages) \$2.00

Vol. 2, *Creation* (585 pages) \$2.00

Vol. 3, *Elijah and Elisha* (477 pages) \$1.50

Vol. 4, *The Epiphany's Elect* (469 pages) \$1.50

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* * *

The Present Truth

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