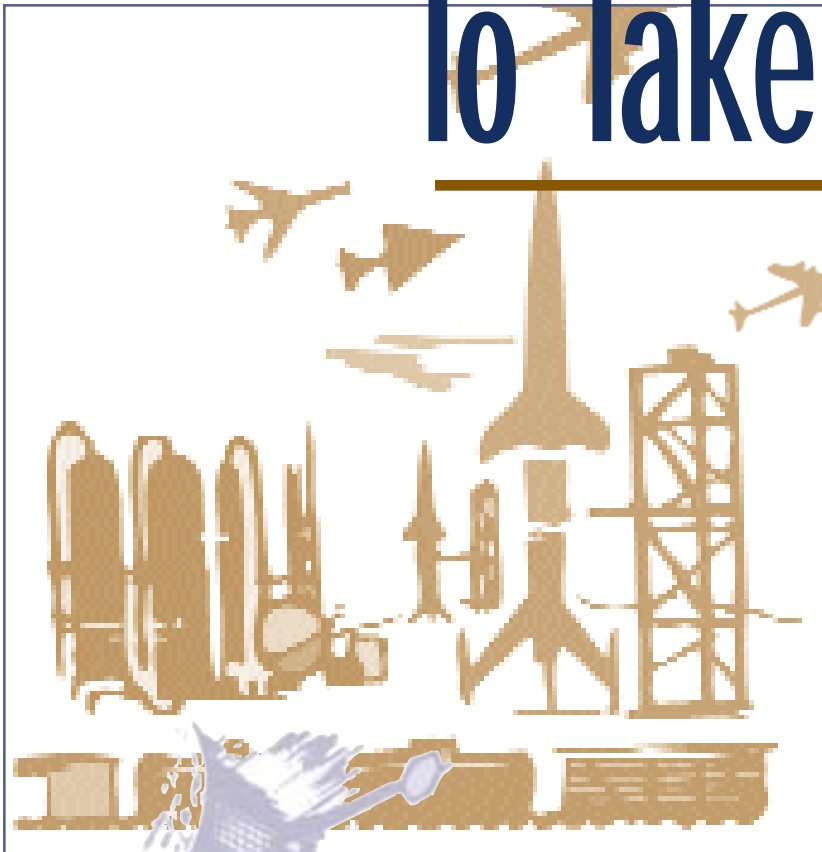


The BIBLE STANDARD

AND
HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

To Take a Prey



NOTE: Double click on
highlighted scriptures to open

"Lift up a standard for the
people" — [Isa. 62: 10](#)

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To Take a Prey*

Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him. And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: . . . Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, To take a spoil, and to take a prey . . .

Ezekiel 38: 2-12

OUR PRIMARY text, **Ezekiel 38: 12**, is a “hat rack” text — we cannot deal with it in full.

Chapters 37 and 38 of Ezekiel relate to the final trouble upon Israel. Israel has always been a prey, even unto the present time.

This month of May sees the commemoration of the founding of Israel — a modern miracle. The country is quite small — about the size of New Jersey or Wales — but one would think it formed the greatest and most oppressive empire on the face of the earth because so many stand in opposition to her.

Abraham and the Land of Palestine

God gave the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants. God did not go out and select a land in the desert, though there is desert in Israel. No, He selected a land rich in milk and honey — the land of promise, a very fruitful land. The soil was rich in Canaan and the land was abundant in cereals, vegetables, fruits, the plants of Carmel, Esdraelon, and the grassy carpet of the Jordan valley.

Abraham and Lot separated because of the dispute that arose among the servants of Lot and the servants of Abraham. Lot looked over the grassy soil and the beautiful nature of the Plain of Esdraelon and he said, in effect, “I want this place because it is so beautiful” (**Gen. 13: 1-12**). Well, it turned out not to be so beautiful — that is where Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. But prior to that time it was very beautiful — the rich foliage of the Jordan, the forest of Mount Tabor, the borders of the lakes. There is an old expression in respects to Canaan that goes, “tickle it with a hoe and it gives you a harvest, or tickle it with a wink and it gives you a harvest.”

So, God selected a place that everybody wanted. And many people were there: Canaanites,

Hittites, Hivites, Jebusites, Philistines, Amorites — all these other people were already in Canaan and they wanted to keep that land. But God had determined to give it to Abraham and to his descendants — Isaac, Jacob, and others after him. God did not select a place that nobody wanted. Israel, however, had to fight for the land.

When Moses sent out the 12 spies (**Num. 13: 1-25**), they came back with the grapes of Eshcol, so heavy that two men could hardly carry the bunches. Even today, Israel is famous for its oranges (Jaffa) and its agricultural products. God selected a worthy land for Israel to occupy. But they had to be prepared to fight for it. And fight they did.

Enemies in the Land

However, there remained a residue of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Ishmaelites, and others. These harassed Israel for a long time thereafter — even to the present day.

One of the biggest reasons for the present difficulty in Israel is that she took a land that was already possessed by others, driving them out by force of arms.

On one occasion, when the Jews were rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem, they were obliged to work with swords in their hands — their enemies were always there.

PALESTINIAN ARAB NATIONALISM VS. ISRAEL

There is another reason Israel is presently having so much difficulty. We quote from the booklet, *Focus on Zionism* (pages 28 and 29), under the heading, “Palestinian Arab Nationalism”:

Nationhood was never sought by the Palestinian Arabs until it was put into their

* This article is adapted and enlarged from a discourse given by the Editor, Bernard W. Hedman.

minds by Muslim neighbours, when Israel agreed to the U.N. Partition Resolution of November, 1947. The terms of that Resolution were recommended by an international committee appointed by the U.N. General Assembly, and accepted by the Jews but not by Arabs.

Aware of mounting Arab opposition to the Resolution, the British, embarrassed by their alliances, announced their decision to withdraw from their Mandate, giving 15 May 1948 as the effective date. David Ben Gurion announced the Independence of the State of Israel on the 14 May, and the surrounding Arab states immediately stepped up their wordy opposition into open warfare by launching an invasion against that land granted to the Jews by the U.N. Resolution. 600,000 Arabs, previously living peaceably enough with the Jews, left the disputed territory voluntarily.

There was no dispossession, there were no enforced refugees. Assuming that the new State of Israel would be throttled at birth by the near-encircling Arab armies, they awaited the time of their return to what would then become, in direct opposition to the U.N. Resolution, an entirely Arab Palestine. Their hopes were dashed, however, as the Arab armies met with military defeat. The Palestinian Arabs who had left their homes [in Israel] were stranded [in Arab countries — *Ed.*]

From that time it apparently has been a ploy of the Arab nations to retain the refugees as a separate entity, and in conditions of privation, to be used as an object of pity, for political reasons, against Israel, especially in the United Nations. There is no justification for the continuance of these privations, bearing in mind the colossal wealth now at the disposal of the oil-rich Arab brethren. We might well ask, why don't these countries give the Palestinians part of their own land? They will not, because they would thereby lose a reason to harass Israel.

Ishmael and His Offspring

You no doubt remember the story of Ishmael. He was born to Hagar, the bondwoman of Sarah. He had 12 sons and became a great nation. His people lived as nomads in northern Arabia. The Old Testament uses the name Ishmael in a broader sense to refer to all the Arab merchants (Isa. 13: 20 and Ezekiel 27: 20, 21). Any wild and warlike peoples of the desert could claim to be the descendants of Ishmael. This wider use of the term Ishmaelites is illustrated by an event in the life of Joseph — he was sold to the Ishmaelites, who were also called Midianites (Gen. 37: 25, 28; Judges 8: 3, 24). The Midianites were enemies of Israel and were a snare to Israel (Num. 25: 16-18). We have seen this continue to the present. Mohammed claimed Ishmael as his ancestor, as do most Arabs. The Ishmaelites, therefore, claim entitlement to the land of Palestine and have provided sacred “meccas” for Jerusalem to support their claims. This helps to explain the great interest in Jerusalem.

In ancient times, Israel was a focal point for trade and travel. The geographical location of Israel was such that control of the land of Israel meant control of the trade routes. Israel was a key factor because of these trade routes. Today, Israel still has a strategic location.

Israel has good reason to retain what it has. For example, the Golan Heights, much in the news today: Syria wants it back from Israel. Israel is reluctant to give it back. Any force occupying the Heights can fire rockets into Israel. Talks aimed at reconciling Syria's claims to the Golan Heights and Israel's concern for her own security are in recess now, but the question will not disappear. Likewise, the claims of the Palestinians against the West Bank and Jerusalem itself will continue to dog Israel and threaten to ignite the dangerous atmosphere which already exists as the Arabs continue grabbing more land.

“FISHERS” AND “HUNTERS”

Since Jer. 16: 14-16 is one of the clearest Scripture passages describing Israel's regathering to the Holy Land, we will examine it in this connection:

“Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

“But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all

FROM THE NEW YORK SUN, 1893

"There are now over 100,000 Jews in the Holy Land. The Jewish population there is larger than it has been at any time since the end of the first century of the Christian era. Nearly four-fifths of them have gone thither from other countries within the last few years, and they have been going thither this year more steadily than ever before. In former times only a small number of Jews were permitted to live in the country, but the restrictions upon their settlement in it and upon their ownership of land have been removed, and they are now at liberty to re-people it and take possession of it. The number of Jews who have returned to Palestine during the dozen years in which they have been free to enter has been greater than the number who returned after the Babylonian captivity, twenty-four centuries ago.

"In the city of Jerusalem itself, according to a report of the British Consul there, the Jewish population is now fully 40,000, and a large part of the real estate in and around the city is in Jewish hands. The number of synagogues, schools of learning, hospitals, and other public institutions is constantly increasing, the water system has been improved, new streets have been opened beyond the walls, telegraphs and electric lights have been introduced, several factories have been set up, and the new railway to Jaffa has already stimulated the activity of the population in various ways. 'Palestine will soon be ready for the Jewish race,' says Rev. Dr. Kelt, of the Episcopal Church of Jerusalem, in a letter to the *London Times*.

"The reports from the northern part of Palestine are favorable. There is activity at Acre and along the route to Damascus. The wheat raisers there are rejoicing in the prospect of finding markets for their crops; so are the raisers of olives and other fruits. The soil in that region is well adapted to the growth of cotton.

"A number of important public works have been undertaken in various parts of the country between the river Jordan and the Mediterranean; and we hear of yet other projects in which the Hebrew capitalists of England and France are prepared to invest all the money that may be needed.

"It will undoubtedly take a long time to regenerate Palestine, but we infer from the news received from Jerusalem that the work of regeneration has been begun. It must take a good many years to give the predominance to the Jewish element in Palestine; but if the number of Jews there should increase for the next ten years at the rate at which it has increased during the last ten years, the Jewish population in the Holy Land will run over a million very soon after the opening of the twentieth century.

"The shutting out from this country of the Jewish as well as other European immigrants, has already had an influence upon the Palestinian movement."

the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

"Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks."

We understand that the "land of the north" refers to Russia in the latter part of the 19th-century, where nearly one-half of the Hebrew race resided. "All the lands" seems to refer to the other countries in which were found large enclaves of Jews, such as Poland, Germany, Romania, and Hungary.

The "Fishers"

Ever since 1878, in harmony with His promise in **Jer. 16: 16**, God has been sending "fishers." Their bait was Zionism. Many statesmen — Jews and Christians — and other influential figures were involved in promoting the cause of Zionism, especially following the work of Theodore Herzl and the Zionist Congress of 1897. Zionism appealed to many Jews and they came from afar to claim their ancient homeland. Others remained where they were until they were pursued by the "hunters."

The "Hunters"

Probably the most frightful chapter of the modern age was the vicious persecution and attempted extermination of the Jewish people by the Nazi regime of Adolf Hitler. Unusually cruel and single-minded in his determination to wipe the Jews off the face of the earth, his barbarism has redefined the word "holocaust" and blotted western civilization with a stain that cannot be removed nor forgotten.

What Zionism could not do, persecution accomplished, driving Jews by the thousands to Palestine and forcing the rest of the world to wake up to their claims and ancient rights. The Holocaust has given a determination for survival and identity to the Jewish nation in a way that no other event in their history of dispersion has ever done.

Did God cause this? This question has been asked by many whose lives were devastated, who have lost whole families, and whose bodies bear permanent scars of suffering and torture.

The Permission of Evil

We cannot understand the reason for any degree of suffering unless we accept that we live in a world cursed by sin; a world in which the permission of evil holds sway.

The Jewish people were hated and persecuted for what they were. Ever since the promise of a chosen Seed to bless mankind was given in Eden (Gen. 3: 14, 15), Satan — the great opponent of God and man — has determined to exterminate it. He attempted it in Egypt and under the Roman Empire, and through all the long centuries of their dispersion. He has fomented hatred of “the Jew” wherever he could. Seeing the gradual unfolding of the promise to re-establish Israel no doubt drove him to greater fury in his attempt to destroy the chosen Seed.

Scripture frequently speaks of God as doing something which in fact He only *permits*. His permission is by no means His moral consent, though this distinction will be missed by many, and cannot be explained to those who do not have faith to comprehend that God has a higher object in view (Psa. 50: 16-21).

ISRAEL, CHANNEL OF BLESSING

Israel has been revived and become again an independent nation. The long-promised time of Israel’s real exaltation as the channel of Messianic blessing to mankind is not far off. What though there shall be another and great spasm of tribulation as this old world closes and a New Order begins? What though the Scriptures tell us that Israel is yet to have “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30: 7) in connection with the great Time of Trouble which has been on the world since 1914? None of these things shall hinder the Lord’s people from rejoicing in the New Heavens and the New Earth, which God declares He is about to create — “Be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create” (Isa. 65: 17, 18; 66: 22). The shining of the lamp of Truth upon the prophetic page shows us that the time is fast approaching when He whose right it is shall take to Himself His great power and reign (Ezek. 21: 27).

Jews to Remain Jews

A voice has been sounding from the “wilderness,” and Jews everywhere have been hearing it. It does not call them to become Christians; rather to be faithful to the ideals set before them by their Covenant God as presented through the Law and the Prophets. The early soundings of this voice were first heard in the Zionist movement. How much has occurred since! Twenty years on from the first Zionist Congress in 1897 saw the taking of Jerusalem from the Turks. A little over 30 years later, 1948, Israel became a free

THE OSLO ACCORD

The writ under which the present intermittent discussions of land for peace continue is the Oslo Accord. Brokered in secret by Norway, this agreement paves the way for the handing over of land now controlled by Israel to the recently established Palestinian Authority.

Yasir Arafat, Chairman of the Palestinian Authority was an unabashed terrorist prior to becoming a “statesman.” The United States and the European Union (EU) are obliged to do business with him. The EU provides the bulk of the finances for development in the West Bank and is endeavoring to play a more significant role in the peace process. As a bloc, the EU is pro-Palestinian, one reason that the United States is reluctant to enlist the Union as a partner in the negotiations.

Under the Accord, Israel has already surrendered Bethlehem and Hebron, David’s city. The sticking point now is Jerusalem — Israel refuses to yield control of the city. It now appears that Mr. Arafat may actually relinquish his claim on the city, possibly sparking a revolt against his leadership.

state. A little under 20 years from then, 1967, saw Israel finally in control of the Holy City. Viewed in the context of the centuries of the Diaspora, Israel’s regathering and reestablishment in these decades has been rapid.

THE TWO SEEDS OF ABRAHAM

Abraham, the father of the faithful, did not understand that his “seed” was to be of two kinds — heavenly and earthly. God hinted at it when He said to Abraham (Gen. 22: 15-18), “I will multiply thy seed as the *stars* of the heaven, and as the *sand* which is upon the sea shore” (emphasis added). Here two “Israels” are referred to. The spiritual promises belonged to the heavenly class (“Zion”), the earthly promises to natural Israel (“Jacob”). Eventually all mankind, blessed under the reign of Messiah, will become “Israelites” — of the Seed of Abraham in the widest sense (Gal. 3: 6-9).

In this first year of the new century, we congratulate Israel on another birthday. As the Apostle Paul emphasizes in Romans 11, verses 12 and 15, she is to be the medium through which God will bring blessings to the whole world. No weapon formed against her will prosper; in God’s power she will escape her would-be predators.

* * *



REGENERATION

Q Matthew 19: 28 reads: “And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (King James Version (KJV)).

What is the “regeneration” referred to in this Scripture?

A Jesus was preaching to the multitudes in the coasts of Judea. A young man asked Him what he needed to do to gain eternal life. After the explanation, the man went away sorrowful, feeling he fell short.

Upon hearing the difficulty of gaining eternal life, the disciples asked Jesus whether they would have any reward, seeing that they had left all to follow Him. The words of [Matthew 19: 28](#) form His reply.

The text under review teaches several things:

- The Millennium and the Judgment Day are identical;
- The manner of restitution; and
- That Jesus and his disciples [standing for the Church] will be the judges of the human family at the time of His kingdom on earth.

The Greek word for regeneration, *paliggenesia*, is translated “the new birth day” in the *Diaglott*. It conveys the thought of a new birth, a reproduction, a renewal, a renovation, a recreation — in short, the restoration of a thing to its pristine state.

Regeneration Refers to a Renewal

Regeneration is just one of the features of Christ’s many offices. He is to be the father of the human race. A father gives life to his children by begetting. Christ performs the office of a father when He gives life to others.

Under the curse of sin and death, Adam and our subsequent paternal ancestors transmitted imperfect dying life to us, their children. By laying down His perfect life, our Lord earned the right to purchase Adam and all his rights, and to reinstate the race in perfect life ([Acts 3: 19-21](#); see our book, *The Bible*, pp. 244, 245, and the April issue of *The Bible Standard*).

In the coming Millennial Kingdom, the world of mankind will receive many blessings as they pass through their judgment. Our Lord as the Everlasting Father and the Church as their “mother” will guide the world through the regeneration process ([Isa. 9: 6](#); compare [Psa. 45: 16](#) and [Isa. 60: 1-5](#)). In [1 Cor. 15: 45-47](#), Jesus is also referred to as the second Adam, the Church being the second Eve.

[Matthew 19: 28](#) is a beautiful passage of Scripture, setting forth mankind’s new birth. How blessed to know that the faithful among mankind will be brought back to the image and likeness of God, similar to that which Adam had in the Garden of Eden!

On thy Church, O Power divine!

Cause thy glorious face to shine,
Till the nations, from afar,

Hail her as their guiding star;
Till her light, from zone to zone,
Makes thy great salvation known.

Then shall she, with lavish hand,

Scatter blessings o’er the land;
Earth shall yield her rich increase,

Every breeze shall whisper peace,
And the world’s remotest bound

With the voice of praise resound.

— Hymn 217, *Hymns of Millennial Dawn*

* * *

LETTERS



Dear friends in Christ:

Hello and greetings from Idaho!

Recently, there was a man that came to Boise, and saw the big cross on a ledge of a foothill called Table Rock. I have seen that cross at night, and it is beautiful. I read in the *Idaho Statesman* about this man, who is from Chicago. He was quoted as saying that the symbol of the cross is degrading; and it shouldn't be advertised on a hill, and especially shouldn't be lit up at night. He also called it a disgrace and an eyesore. When asked what religion he was, he stated he was an atheist.

God bless you, and thank you for the *Bible Standard*. I have learned so much from the Studies in the Scriptures; it is a night and day difference for me, as far as my comprehension — these are things no man can put a price on. I love you all in the name of Christ, and request that you continue to flourish and deliver the Word of God.

Love, M.B., Idaho

Dear friends of Laymen's Home Missionary Movement:

I received one of your tracts, "Coming By and By" a couple of years ago. I put it away in my box and I read it now and then.

But now it is like an answer to prayer. I have trouble witnessing to people, and I recently heard on the radio about tract ministries and felt it was something I would enjoy doing. Then today I pulled your tract out of my box. I loved it.

I am very interested in receiving some of these. Would that be possible? Maybe 100 to start. If so, I would be more than happy to return the favor by sending you a small gift of my appreciation.

K.H., Mississippi

Greetings! I am writing to ask for volume 8 in the Epiphany series, *Numbers*. These books are wonderful. Thank you for everything. [This book gives much good history of the Reformation teachers and teachings — *Ed.*]

In Christ, J.H., Indiana

* * *

The Bible Standard welcomes your letters. We reserve the right to edit all letters received for length and readability. Our practice is to indicate only the writer's initials, except where the individual is a known appointee of the Movement. Anonymous letters will not be published.

of interest . . .

International efforts to fight computer crime are under way. Law enforcement officials from the G8 group of developed countries are studying ways to tackle the rising tide of internet crime. Under study is cross-border co-operation as a means of catching internet criminals. Legal loopholes across the world will also be examined. For instance, in the recent "Love Bug" virus case investigators in the Philippines had to delay a raid while prosecutors searched for laws that could apply in the case. The Council of Europe — a grouping of 41 nations — is working with the United States, Canada, Japan and South Africa to draft a treaty to institute standard laws against "cybercrime." Several other countries, including India and Thailand, are separately considering laws against computer crimes.

* * *

Climate-related catastrophes in poor countries are likely to get out of control unless action is taken by the developed countries to tackle global warming. So warns Christian Aid, the United Kingdom's church development agency. In the next 20 years, up to 75% of the world's people, most of them in poor countries, could be at risk from droughts or floods. The agency urges developed countries to make big cuts in their emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

* * *

In only one day scientists have unravelled the complete genetic sequence of an antibiotic-resistant "superbug," *Enterococcus faecium* — one of the leading causes of hospital-acquired infections. The microbe is quite common and usually harmless, but among vulnerable patients can trigger deadly infections. Researchers are concerned by the microbe's ability to develop resistance to antibiotics, including vancomycin, usually considered the last line of defense against bacterial infections. Understanding the bacterium's "life code" will allow scientists to find new ways of fighting the organism. The work has been done with surprising speed — even by the latest standards. The 2.8 million "base pairs" — the nucleotides that pair up to make the twisted ladder of DNA's double helix — were sequenced using what is essentially just one day's production capacity at the U.S. Department of Energy's Joint Genome Institute (JGI) in California. The code is in large fragments that now need to be ordered and analyzed to find the location of what are thought to be about 3,000 genes.

announcements . . .

For a detailed listing of our publications please see the November-December 1999 issue. A copy free on request.

BEREAVED NOTICES

Doris Moore, wife of Auxiliary Pilgrim, Brother Elmer Herzig, and member of the Pittsfield, Massachusetts class, died at age 88. She served at the Bible House in the mid-1950's as a Secretary and general assistant.

Amy Williams, of Bog Walk, Jamaica, ecclesia died after a long illness in March.

Beulah-Amir Brooks, mother of Sister Hilary Gill and sister of Sister Grace Amir — long-time member of the Bible House family — died April 1, aged 75.

Macmillan Dickson, Nigeria, Secretary for the Ikot Okubo Offot ecclesia, died on March 11.

GENERAL CONVENTIONS FOR 2000

At-a-glance

U.S.

Michigan, May 27-29

Bible House locale Convention, July 1-4 (*Note: No formal picnic outing at the Bible House; convention is a day longer than usual.*)

Ohio, Aug. 25-27

Illinois, Oct. 6-8

Oklahoma, Nov. 17-19

France

Summer: July 28, 29, 30

August 26, 27

Autumn: October 21-22

Great Britain

Hyde: August 4-6

Sheffield: October 28, 29

Poland

Krakow: July 17-19

Wroclaw: July 21, 22, 23

Bydgoszcz: July 25-27

Africa

Nigeria (Umunkiri): June 23-25

Details

United States

Muskegon, Michigan, May 27-29, 2000 (Saturday-Monday)

Site: Comfort Inn, U.S. 31 at Sherman Boulevard, Muskegon, Michigan 49444. *Rates*: \$54-\$59, plus tax; includes Continental breakfast. *Reservations* may be made by calling the Comfort Inn

(231) 739-9092 (have credit card handy; ask for a confirmation number). All other inquiries (*after April 17*) to Mrs. Carlla Olson, 1503 Carleton Street, Whitehall, MI 49461.

Philadelphia Area, Lionville, Pennsylvania, July 1-4 (Sat.-Tues.)

Site: Best Western Hotel, Route 100 near Route 113, in Lionville, Pennsylvania ((610) 363-1100). *Rates and Reservations: Please make all reservations through the Bible House.* A letter has been sent out to interested brethren. *Note*: Due to Bible House staff responsibilities and the changes made to our headquarters (reduction of bedrooms), we cannot accommodate as many as in previous years. Only simple accommodations will be provided here, on a first-come, first-serve basis.

SERVICES BY VISITING MINISTERS

Carl Seebald

Minneapolis, June 10, 11

Ralph Herzig

Springfield, Massachusetts, June 4

Robert Herzig

Boston, June 25

Jan Wojnar

Pittsfield, Massachusetts, June 11

Richard Blaine

Waycross, Georgia, June 18

Leon Snyder

Pittsfield, Massachusetts, May 2; Chicago, May 6, 7

Baron Duncan

Fort Lauderdale, Florida, May 4, 5; Jacksonville, Florida, May 7, 8

Evangelists' Services

Robert Branconnier, Auburn, Massachusetts, May 14; Chester Springs, Pennsylvania, May 17; Manteo, North Carolina, May 18; Wilmington, North Carolina, May 19; Raleigh, North Carolina, May 20; Reidsville, North Carolina, May 21; Norfolk, May 23; New York, June 4

Tom Cimbura, *Germany*; following locations: Wuppertal, May 14; Bad Ems, May 15; Heidelberg, May 16

U.S.: Grand Rapids/Muskegon, June 17, 18

David Lounsbury, Reidsville, North Carolina, May 11

Harold Solomon, Boston, May 28