

# The BIBLE STANDARD

AND  
HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

## Parables of the Kingdom

All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world  
(Matt. 13: 34, 35)

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

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# Parables of the Kingdom

*All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.*

Matt. 13: 34, 35

**JESUS SPOKE NUMEROUS PARABLES** concerning His coming Kingdom. These different parable-pictures represent the same subject from different standpoints, just as we may have various photographs of a building, taken from the north, the south, the east and the west, internally and externally. We have selected several parables from Matthew chapter 13 and one from Matthew 25.

## **A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED**

Matthew 13: 31, 32

In this parable the Kingdom is likened to a grain of mustard. As a mustard seed is very small, yet produces a large bush, big enough for the fowls of the air to lodge in its branches, so this illustrates how the nominal Kingdom would, from a small beginning, grow to a considerable size. Thus the message of Christ was received at first by only a few of the poor; but the nominal Kingdom grew during the Gospel Age to such immense proportions that the fowls gathered in its branches. The fowls, according to our Lord's interpretation of a previous parable, represent "the wicked one" and his servants (vs. 4, 19).

The teaching of this parable leads us to conclude that the Church of Christ was once very unimportant in the world, and it was a shame and dishonor to belong to it. Ultimately it became great and honorable as an institution and the Adversary's servants took pleasure in its shade. The Scriptures represent this development as being symbolic Babylon, declaring that in various branches or denominations the nominal Church of Christ has become Babylonish.

Hearken to the Lord's words: Babylon has become "the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird" (Rev. 18: 2). This intimates a large outward development of the Church, which was not to her advantage and glory, but the opposite. Even though His Spirit has been misrepresented and an improper development produced, ultimately the great Head of the Church will bring order out of chaos and confusion.

## **LEAVEN HIDDEN IN THE MEAL**

Matt. 13: 33

This parable illustrates the process by which the nominal Church would get into the wrong condition of heart. We understand the three measures of meal to represent the true faith, hope, and love, which were to remain with the

Church after the gifts of the Spirit given to establish the early Church (such as healing, working miracles, speaking in unknown tongues) would cease (1 Cor. 12: 28-31; 13: 1, 2, 8, 13).

As a woman would take her batch of flour for baking and put leaven (yeast) into it, the entire mass becoming leavened, so with the nominal Church of Christ: the spiritual food for the entire household would become leavened or corrupted by mixing the leaven of error with the true faith, hope and love. Every portion would gradually become more or less vitiated with the leaven of false doctrines, permeating the entire mass. The result we see today — almost every doctrine presented by Jesus and His Apostles has become more or less twisted and perverted by the errors of the Dark Ages.

## **THE TREASURE HID IN A FIELD**

Matt. 13: 44

Here the Kingdom is likened unto "treasure hid in a field." A man, realizing its value, desired it for himself, and had such faith in it that he disposed of all his property in order to buy the field, which contained the precious treasure.

The field seems to represent the world of mankind. In the world of mankind our Lord saw a treasure: Prospectively, He saw the result of His own redemptive work, the deliverance of many from the bondage of corruption into the full liberty of sons of God — the Very Elect, the Church, in the Gospel Age, and the worthy of the world in the Millennial Age to follow (Rom. 8: 21). In view of this treasure He "purchased" the field — He was fully satisfied to give His life, and all He then had, to purchase the world (Isa. 53: 11).

The field belongs to God and He placed the treasure there. He offered it for sale to any willing to pay the price. The buyer is the Lord. Those who accept His invitation join with Him in the sacrifice of their earthly interests to be sharers with Him in His Kingdom — in the

work of the Age to come, to unearth all that treasure in the blessing of the world of mankind. The hiding of the treasure is necessary, as our Lord intimates: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you" (Matt. 7: 6) — they will not understand you, will think you foolish, and in their disappointment may do you injury.

### THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

**Matt. 13: 45, 46**

Pearls were much more in vogue in ancient times than now. Pearl buyers traded in these gems and carried them to market, where they were highly esteemed.

The merchant of this parable comes across the finest pearl he has ever seen. He considers it so priceless that he rejoices to sell or trade all his other pearls and property to become the owner of it.

Likewise, the Gospel offer of a share with Christ in His Kingdom is superior to all the propositions of the world. The honor of the world, of name, fame, position and wealth are indeed desirable. In fact, the Scriptures say, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches" (Prov. 22: 1). But when our eyes behold "the pearl of great price," the Kingdom offer of our Lord Jesus, the offer of assisting Him in His great work of blessing all the families of the earth, we realize this is a priceless thing, worth far more than all the honors, dignities and pleasures of the world.

Those worthy to buy this pearl will gladly exchange all earthly things for it — even their good name, and this will be necessary, for the Master forewarned them, saying, they "shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake; rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matt. 5: 11, 12). He who is not willing to have the Kingdom at such a cost is not worthy of the Kingdom. "We must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14: 22). Only those who willingly endure such tribulations for righteousness' sake — for the sake of the Truth, in obedience to their calling, are overcomers.

### THE NET WHICH GATHERED OF EVERY KIND

**Matt. 13: 47-50**

Another parable of the Kingdom represents the Gospel message as a dragnet. Only one kind of symbolic *fish* (men, **Matt. 4: 19**) is desired, but the net gathers every kind — real Christians, half-deceived and deluded Christians, and

multitudes of hypocrites. Not every kind inherits the Kingdom with Christ Jesus, hence the end of the Gospel Age is here designated a sifting, separating time. The desirable fish are gathered into vessels, and the remainder are cast back into the sea as unfit for a place among the elect in the Kingdom, though not necessarily unfit for future salvation.

In vs. 49, 50, the furnace of fire symbolizes the great Time of Trouble with which this Age ends, in which the kingdoms of this world give place to Christ's Mediatorial Kingdom. It is the establishment of this Kingdom upon the earth for which the Church has been praying for 20 centuries, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6: 10). What a Kingdom it will be! Entrusted to Jesus and

His Little Flock (**Luke 12: 32**),

it will be empowered to establish the rule of heaven on earth!

### THE PARABLE OF THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS

**Matthew 25: 31-46**

Jesus in this parable tells what takes place after His Kingdom is set up — after the exaltation of the Church class to be the Bride, the Lamb's Wife and Joint-heir in His Kingdom. This is clearly stated by the Master, saying, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the *holy angels* with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory" (emphasis ours). Then follows a description of the work of the Millennial Age. "Before him shall be gathered all nations." This refers to the people of the world. Everybody except the Church will be before His great white throne of justice, mercy and love (**comp. Rev. 20: 11-15**). "God . . . hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (**Acts 17: 31**).

Six thousand years ago, Adam and his entire race were judged in Eden, and the sentence was death (**Gen. 2: 17**). None of the race is by nature worthy of everlasting life, for all are sinners. In due time God sent His Son to die for Adam's sin, in order that, "since by man came death, by man [Jesus] came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order . . ." (1 Cor. 15: 21-23).

The first order to be made alive in Christ is

### THE TREASURE HID IN A FIELD



the Church, called out of the world, “begotten again” of the Holy Spirit. These were to pass their judgment, their trial, throughout the Gospel Age. These worthy ones, with characters that are pleasing and acceptable to God, are joint-heirs (“holy angels”) with Him in His Kingdom and in His work of judging the world throughout its trial period, the Millennial Age (1 Cor. 6: 2, 3). He promised that all the faithful would sit with Him in His throne (Rev. 3: 21) — the throne pictured in the words of our text — before which all the peoples of the world will be assembled, figuratively speaking.

Those in the parable have accepted Christ’s terms and desire to be on judgment, on trial, for everlasting life. Messiah’s Kingdom will exercise its power and disseminate the knowledge of God and of righteousness (1 Tim. 2: 4), with a view to encouraging, helping and uplifting all the willing and obedient. All such will then be privileged to rise more and more out of sin and death conditions — out of imperfection of mind and body and out of immoral conduct to the full image of God on the human plane, as possessed by Adam in the beginning.

The work of the entire Millennial Age will bring this about. Righteousness will reign as sin reigns now (2 Pet. 3: 13). Then the world in general will be a grand place, in that great Kingdom (mountain) where “they shall not hurt nor destroy” (Isa. 11: 9), where the curse shall be gradually rolled away, and there shall be no more sorrow, no more crying, no more pain, no more dying (Rev. 21: 1-5), and where the blessing of God, bringing perfection, will prevail. All who live during those thousand years will be greatly blessed.

**Law of Retribution Operative**

But what about the sins of the world? Will there be no punishments for these? We answer that it will be equally as just for God to forgive the sins of the world for Christ’s sake as it has been just for Him to forgive the sins of the Church for Christ’s sake (1 John 2: 2). God is no respecter of persons, and is equally as willing to forgive the sins of the world as the sins of the Church, when the world, repenting of sin, accept Christ as their Redeemer.

This does not mean that justice is to be ignored. We assume that certain stripes, or punishments, will be permitted to follow the world. It will be from these weaknesses and frailties that they will be gradually raised up to perfection during those blessed thousand years of Christ’s Kingdom, when Satan will be bound and not permitted to deceive any during that period (Rev. 20: 1-3).

Outwardly the “sheep” and the “goats” will have much the same appearance and demeanor, except to the Judge, the King, who will read their hearts and ultimately manifest to all that there has been a distinct heart difference between the two classes, all of whom will have been on trial during the thousand years, receiving blessings from the Kingdom.

**The Basis of Judgment**

Every individual will develop a character during the period of trial. This character will be fully evaluated by the Great Judge, each individual rated either as a “sheep” or a “goat.” The sheep class will be received at the right hand of Jehovah.

The goat class, separated to His left, will drop out of His favor, even though they will be receiving the Kingdom blessings and rendering outward conformity to its laws.

At the close of the Millennium, the decision of the Judge will be manifested.

Surprise will be shown at His decision by both groups. To the “sheep” at His right hand He will say, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

When God laid the foundation of the earth and planned its human habitation, His design was to give the kingdom on earth to you. The time has come for you to enter into this Kingdom and to possess it. The kingdom here referred to is not the Mediatorial Kingdom. It is the kingdom which God gave to Adam and which he lost through disobedience and which Christ redeemed by sacrificing Himself. It will be given only to those who will have developed God-like characters — those who will have become the Lord’s “sheep” during the Millennium.

The goats of the parable will be sentenced as follows: “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire [destruction], prepared for the devil and his angels.” Granted all the privileges, blessings and experiences of the thousand years of contact with righteousness, truth and the Spirit of God, you render an outward obedience, but at heart have not come into harmony with God. I cannot recognize you as My sheep. I cannot present you to the Father blameless and irrevocable. You must be destroyed; the punishment is the Second Death, everlasting destruction. The penalty upon you is everlasting because there will not be any further provision made for your redemption or your resurrection from the Second Death. You will be as though you had never existed (Obad. 16). You have utterly failed to appreciate the goodness of God and to copy His

**THE NET WHICH GATHERED OF EVERY KIND**



character-likeness. Eternal life is only for those who have God's likeness and Spirit.

Both classes, the "sheep" and the "goats," are surprised at what the Judge declares as the basis for His judgment. To the sheep He said, "I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." To the goat class He said, "I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not."

Both "sheep" and "goats" claimed that they had no knowledge of such experiences. When did we minister unto Thee? When did we fail to minister unto Thee? The answer is revealing: Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these My brethren, or did it not unto him, ye did or did it not unto Me.

### Characteristics of the Sheep Class

Who are these who will prove to be a test upon the sheep class and upon the goat class? Will there be people sick, hungry and in prison during the Millennium? We have always assumed that sickness, poverty, hunger and prisons will then be gone forever. How are we to make sense of this?

With the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom, all who come into harmony with it will have the great privilege of doing something to help others. The world is blind and starved now, for lack of spiritual food and the anointing eyesalve of the Truth (Rev. 3: 18). While the Millennial blessings will be showered upon those who accept the Lord's terms, others will need assistance. Those having the spirit of God, the spirit of Love, will gladly carry the heavenly message of reconciliation to all humanity, apply the eyesalve to the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, and help the sin-sick back into harmony with God — to the blessings of Messiah's Kingdom, to the way these may be obtained — helping them to cover their nakedness with the covering righteousness of Christ. All who will take pleasure in this work will be manifesting that they possess God's Spirit and are co-laborers with Him. These will be the "sheep." However, those who will be careless as to their consecration vow, selfishly enjoying the Millennial blessings themselves, will be of the goat class and correspondingly will be out of favor with the great King of kings, their Judge.

### The Resurrection of the World

It will be the "sheep" that will be especially interested in, praying for and preparing for those who are in the great prison-house of death. While the blessing of the Lord will provide an abundance for all, we may assume that this provision will be in the hands of their fellows. By thus engaging their time and energy, these "sheep" will be manifesting a purpose, a will, in harmony with that of their Creator. God has willed that all who are in their graves shall come forth at the command of Jesus (John 5: 28, 29), and

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***He who sits upon the throne, having redeemed the world of mankind and having provided for the resurrection of all these redeemed ones, counts them in a certain sense as representing Himself — as He indicates in the parable.***

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those in sympathy with God and Christ will be co-laborers with God in accomplishing the work for which Christ died. Any not interested in that work will be lacking in God's Spirit. This is exactly what is charged against the goat class. He who sits upon the throne, having redeemed the world of mankind and having provided for the resurrection of all these redeemed ones, counts them in a certain sense as representing Himself — as He indicates in the parable.

### The Fire of God's Anger

The eternal fire is the fire of God's jealousy or anger, which burns against and destroys everything antagonistic to His righteousness (Zeph. 3: 8). It is a figurative expression representing complete destruction — "everlasting punishment" (Matt. 25: 46), everlasting "cutting off." The Greek word *kolasin*, in v. 46 translated "punishment," does not mean *torment*, as some have been led to think. According to Liddell and Scott's Greek lexicon, its primary meaning is "a pruning or checking the growth of trees."

In his comment on v. 46, Benjamin Wilson writes:

That is, in the fire mentioned in verse 41. The Common Version, and many modern ones, render *kolasin aionioon*, everlasting punishment, conveying the idea, as generally interpreted, of *basinos*, torment. *Kolasin* in its various forms only occurs in three other places in the New Testament — Acts iv. 21; 2 Pet. ii. 9; 1 John iv. 18. It is derived from *kolazoo*, which signifies: 1. *To cut off*; as lopping off branches of trees, to prune. 2. *To restrain, to repress*. The Greeks write — "The charioteer [*kolazei*] restrains his fiery steeds." 3. *To chastise, to punish*. To cut off an individual from life, or society, or even to restrain, is esteemed as *punishment*; — hence has arisen this *third* metaphorical use of the word. The primary signification has been adopted, because it agrees better with the second member of the sentence, thus preserving the force and beauty of the antithesis. The righteous go to *life*, the wicked to the *cutting off* from life, or *death*. See 2 Thess 1. 9.

*The Emphatic Diaglott*, by Benjamin Wilson, I.B.S.A., 1942 edition

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# BIBLE QUESTION BOX



## WHY PARABLES?

**Q** Why did Jesus speak in parables?

**A** Jesus related simple stories using figurative language to show literal happenings. He is the Master of masters in the use of parables to illustrate spiritual truths.

His disciples observed His way of communicating with the large groups of people who came to hear him, so they probed for an answer (Matt. 13: 10-16): “Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall not perceive: For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.”

We live in an age in which faith is essential. The understanding of God’s Word is only for those with an ear to hear, who have enough of the qualities necessary for spiritual understanding, such as humility, meekness and a hunger for the Truth. Lacking these qualities tends toward self-will and preferring one’s own opinions. The majority of our Lord’s audience lacked the requisite qualities so it was really a mercy that our Lord did not speak plainly; that would have undervalued the Truth and done damage to the hearers (Rom. 11: 32).

Of course He would always explain the interpretation to His disciples privately. For them it was part of the “profitable teaching” needed for their development (2 Tim. 3: 16). Blessed are those who fully reverence Him, for to such only is “the secret of the Lord” revealed (Psa. 25: 14).

What a wonderful prospect lies ahead for those who do not have eyes to see or ears to hear at the present time, for after God’s present purposes of election are completed and His earthly Kingdom is fully ushered in, His Word says that then “the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped (Isa. 35: 5).

### **The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16: 19-31)**

There is a lot of confusion regarding this account. Is it to be taken as literal or as symbolic?

Many hold that the story of the rich man and Lazarus is a literal account. However, although not plainly stated, the Bible indicates that it is a parable – Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables, “and without a parable spake he not unto them” (Matt. 13: 34, 35; Luke 8: 10). This particular parable was directed to the Pharisees, the leaders of the multitude. Jesus thus illustrated the imminent introduction of Gentiles into God’s favor, in the heavenly Kingdom offer of the opening Gospel dispensation, and the casting off of the Jewish nation from God’s special favor, in the closing of the Jewish Age.

*A literal interpretation of this tale would be contrary to*

- God’s character, which is described in Jer. 9: 24: “But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exercise lovingkindness, judgment and righteousness, in the earth.” God’s four great attributes are shown in this verse: exercise (power), lovingkindness (love), judgment (wisdom) and righteousness (justice). Keeping the rich man eternally in a place of torment would impinge against all four of these attributes.

- The hub doctrine of the Bible, the ransom. Of our Lord it is stated that He is the “man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time”; He “tasted death for every man” (1 Tim. 2: 5, 6; Heb. 2: 9). Since the Scriptures teach that the penalty for sin is death, we see how contrary to the ransom the literal interpretation is with its teaching that eternal life in torment is the penalty for sin.

- The Bible teaching on hell. The Bible teaches that hell – *sheol*, *hades* or *gehenna* — is the unconscious condition entered at death. For example, Eccles. 9: 10: “There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave [*sheol*], whither thou goest” (brackets ours).

- The method of parabolic interpretation. Parables are to be interpreted as parables and not as literal stories. For instance, when Jesus spoke of the four kinds of soil (Matt. 13: 3-23), He did not mean literal soil, but four kinds of hearts into which the Word of God is sown. The parable of the wheat and tares (Matt. 13: 24-30) does not refer to literal wheat and tares, but symbolic wheat, God’s true people, and symbolic tares, counterfeit Christians.

### **A Brief Explanation of the Parable’s Symbology**

By the rich man we understand the Jewish nation to be meant: *before* he died, Fleshly Israel during the Jewish Age; *after* he died, Fleshly Israel during the Gospel, or Church, Age. This nation was given by God the promise of becoming a kingdom of royal priests, symbolized by the linen and purple garments (Exod. 19: 5, 6). They feasted well on the Law and the Prophets. His death represents Israel’s being cast off as God’s favored people.

Lazarus represents the God-fearing Gentiles who, in beggarly fashion, waited at the “gates” of rich Israel, not allowed to enter but feeding on the crumbs of truth which occasionally came their way. The dogs that licked his sores represent the heathen philosophers who by their teachings gave temporary relief for his plight. His death represents the Gentiles ceasing to be outcasts. The Gentiles were carried by the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles into the Abrahamic promises and joy.

The rich man, Israel, now cast off, envied the condition of the Gentiles, now accepted in Christ, the Beloved of God. Wanting relief from their miseries — persecution, isolation, rejection — throughout the Gospel Age, they were told, figuratively, that without faith in their Messiah they could not get relief and could not bridge the great chasm, Jesus. The rich man’s request for help for his brethren represents the Jews’ belief that the answer to their cast-off condition could be found in the Law and Prophets. The reply pinpointed their error: that if they did not already believe the testimony of the Law and the Prophets, neither would they believe the testimony of Jesus, Who in His resurrection confirmed His Messiahship.

For a more comprehensive study of this parable, please see *The Bible Standard*, No. 371 – copies free on request.



My Dear Brothers in the Lord: A couple of years back I wrote to you requesting copies of *The Bible Standard* magazine and some other publications. With the literature, it was asked that I study carefully the contents of all you sent before making a decision about receiving any more. Heeding your advice, I have taken considerable time to study, ponder and pray upon each of the materials you did send and have come to a personal conclusion that your publications are unsectarian, in-depth in the revelation of topical issues in the Scriptures and sharp at upholding the Bible as the true Word of the Almighty Father.

. . . I have surrendered my life to the Living God so that I can fathom properly Who He is, as this will enable me to worship Him, adore Him and relate with Him much better. I also intend, by the grace of God, to use your literature in conjunction with the Holy Bible to reach out to as many as are in my vicinity.

Do please send my greetings to all. It is my prayer that the good work that the Father has set upon you people to undertake will be rewarded. Once more, be blessed and shalom to you all.

Yours in His vineyard, P.S., Nigeria

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father in Christ our Savior!

Warm greetings unto you from Quebec. I pray that this letter finds you well and happy. I request another year's subscription to

*The Bible Standard*. May God bless you and your loved ones in everything. May protection, strength and peace of the Almighty be with you always.

In Christian love, R.D., Canada

Dear brothers and sisters:

Enclosed is a check for . . . please send me the complete set of Bible Keys. I have been reading the Bible for 18 years, and the Lord has not moved me to be of any denomination. I've been enlightened by your tracts, and the booklet *Satan, Satanism, Demonism and Exorcism*. I am able to recall the information I have read in the Bible – except now I see and understand. God has answered a prayer for wisdom through your mission, and please accept any excess funds as a gift offering. If possible, include the tracts, the “Sabbath Day” and “War on Poverty.”

Thank you, K.G., Mass.

*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 . . .

**A working group** of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, AAAS, has concluded that human trials which involve the modification of human genes would be unsafe, and should not be undertaken until standards and stringent oversights are in place. The report highlighted recent successes in treating certain diseases with what is known as somatic gene therapy, which deals only with genes that cannot be inherited. However, the AAAS said it would be irresponsible at present to use such techniques to treat inherited genetic ills because of the risk of introducing new genetic problems that could be passed on to children. There were also religious, ethical, and medical questions to be addressed.

Current gene therapy trials involve the correction of genes contained in existing mature body cells, such as bone marrow, rather than reproductive cells. However, research carried out in animals suggests that it may one day be possible to cure inherited genetic disorders by modifying genes in a patient's sperm or eggs. This raises fears that the practice could be used to produce a new generation of so-called “designer children.”

\* \* \*

**Ice cores recovered** from high in the Himalayas suggest the 1990s was the warmest decade for at least 1,000 years. The cores were drilled in a glacier flanking Xixabangma, a 8,014-metre (26,293-foot) peak on the southern rim of the Tibetan Plateau. Scientists from the United States and China analyzed the composition of the different layers in the ice to form a picture of the regional climate year by year, stretching back over the past millennium. The cores are also thought to show a clear record of at least eight major droughts caused by a failure of the South Asian Monsoon, the worst being a catastrophic seven-year-long dry spell that cost the lives of more than 600,000 people at the end of the 18th century.

The seasonal layers in the ice were analyzed for dust concentrations and trace chemicals, and for the ratios of the different types of oxygen and hydrogen atoms. The isotope ratios were used to calculate the air temperatures present when the ice was formed. Dust concentrations were used as an indication of dryness or wetness in the region.

However, some researchers still doubt human activities are the cause of global warming or, indeed, that global warming is a fact. They question not only the accuracy of so-called proxy data like ice cores but some of the conclusions drawn from them. Although surface data gathered at weather stations show a rapid warming over the last century, the atmospheric data produced in the last few decades by satellite and balloon studies show little or no warming. The researchers believe these inconsistencies must be adequately explained before humans are blamed for climate change.

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## announcements . . .

### THE BIBLE STANDARD ON THE WEB

*The Bible Standard* is now on the internet. The result of several months of cooperative effort between brethren at our International Headquarters and the British Branch of the Laymen's Home Missionary Movement, the site features recent issues of *The Bible Standard* and related information and introductory questions and answers. The site will be refined and expanded over the next few months. Point your browser to [www.biblestandard.com](http://www.biblestandard.com)

The site also provides access to affiliated sites in France, Germany, and Poland in their respective languages. These sites are maintained separately. We anticipate the launching of a site in the United Kingdom later this year.

Please mail any comments regarding the **United States site** to: "[biblestandard.com](http://biblestandard.com)," 1156 St. Matthews Road, P.O. Box 67, Chester Springs, PA 19425-0067; if by e-mail, send to [jdavis@biblestandard.com](mailto:jdavis@biblestandard.com)

### BIBLE STANDARD QUESTION AND ANSWER BOOK

The *Bible Standard Question and Answer Book* contains all the entries from the "Question Box" and "Bible Question Box" which have appeared in *The Bible Standard* and its forerunner, *The Herald of the Epiphany*, over the past 79 years. The compilation is the result of faithful work by several brethren working in their spare time. Looseleaf, in a handsome 3-ring binder, the publication is available for \$20.00, postpaid for the U.S.; add 10% for overseas shipment. A number of the questions from this book appear on our web site ([biblestandard.com](http://biblestandard.com)).

### DEATH NOTICE

Brother Roger Wiggins, South Carolina, died on April 7 from an infection contracted while undergoing rehabilitation. He suffered for a number of years with arthritis and osteoporosis. Roger was the son of the late Sister M. Wiggins, a long-time worker at our International Headquarters in the 1970's. We extend our sympathy to his family.

### MEMORIAL DATE FOR 2001

The Memorial date for 2001 falls on Friday, April 6, after 6:00 p.m.

### GENERAL CONVENTIONS FOR 2000, 2001

*At-a-glance*

#### U.S.

Illinois, Oct. 6-8; Oklahoma, Nov. 17-19; 2001: California, Feb. 17-19, *tentative*; Florida, March 16-18; Massachusetts, April 28-30

#### France

*Near Barlin*: October 21-22

#### Great Britain

*Sheffield*: October 28, 29

#### Nigeria

*Aba (Dafodio Road Primary School)*: November 24-26

*Details*

#### United States

*Chicago*, October 6, 7, 8 (Friday-Sunday)

*Site*: Holiday Inn Rolling Meadows, 3405 Algonquin Road, Rolling Meadows, Ill. 60008 ((847) 259-5000). *Rates and Reservations*: \$69.30 (including tax), flat rate, up to four people per room.

### SERVICES BY VISITING MINISTERS

#### Cesar Obajtek, Auxiliary Pilgrim from France

International Headquarters, Chester Springs, Pennsylvania, October 1

Chicago Convention, October 6, 7, 8

New York City, October 15, *tentative*

#### Carl W. Seebald

Chicago Convention, October 6, 7, 8

Chicago, Illinois, October 28, 29

#### Richard Blaine

Marietta, Georgia, October 1

Chicago Convention, October 6, 7, 8

Beechgrove, Tennessee, October 10

#### Jan Wojnar

Springfield, Massachusetts, October 1

#### John Detzler

Chicago Convention, October 6, 7, 8

#### Leon Snyder

Minneapolis, October 4, 5

Chicago Convention, October 6, 7, 8

#### Baron Duncan

Chicago Convention, October 6, 7, 8

#### Evangelists' Services

Robert Branconnier, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, October 8

Edward Tomkiewicz, Muskegon-Grand Rapids, October 11, 12

Harold Solomon, New Haven, Connecticut, October 15

Daniel Herzig, Boston, October 29

*Note*: Tom Cimbura served in Calgary, September 16, 17; date was unavailable at time September issue went to press

For a catalogue of our publications please request a free copy of the November-December 1999 issue.