

The BIBLE STANDARD

AND
HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

Combined Issue

A King's Salvation

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

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A King's Salvation

“He giveth salvation unto kings”

Psa. 144: 10

Mankind is collectively and individually enslaved in numerous ways. History shows us that for most of his existence man's life has been a troubled one — a consequence of the curse pronounced on Adam and Eve. Our combined Thanksgiving and Christmas meditation looks at the enslaving effects of that curse and the blessed deliverance foreshadowed by the birth of the Savior.

TO THE THOUGHTFUL CHRISTIAN it is apparent that there is something wrong with the human condition. There exists in each one of us two minds. We are torn between the things of the flesh and the things of the spirit. Our desires are “contrary,” as the Apostle Paul expresses it in Gal. 5: 17:

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Elsewhere, the Apostle proclaims of himself:

I know that my selfish desires won't let me do anything that is good. Even when I want to do right I cannot. Instead of doing what I know is right, I do wrong.

(Rom 7: 18, 19, *Contemporary English Version*)

Similarly, St. James lays out in detail the problem with the human condition (James 3: 7-12):

[E]very kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?

Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

ROYALTY ENSLAVED

Adam was created in God's likeness and image (Gen. 1: 26, 27). He was given stewardship over the perfect garden, Eden. This first man, then, was created as a king, having dominion over God's creation (Heb. 2: 6-8). He was bound — under pain of death — to obey one simple condition (Gen. 2: 15-17). At his — and Eve's — disobedience in eating of the forbidden fruit God pronounced a terrible sentence. Henceforth their lot would be an onerous one. For Eve, the sentence included travail in childbirth; and Adam was cursed with an unyielding ground, over which he would have to gain mastery by the sweat of his brow (Gen. 3: 16-19). From this point mankind's enslavement began. As verse 8 of Hebrews 2 says, “But now we see not yet all things put under him” — Adam lost his kingship and his dominion was lost to all his descendants. The grand inheritance was forfeited through disobedience and the slavery of the race began.

The human heart has always yearned for freedom. For most of earth's history this has been a yearning unfulfilled. Cruel and rapacious regimes were the common standard for many societies. And even under a more enlightened polity the common man and woman have been bound to land and labor by poverty and deprivation, or else bound in spirit to foolish and superstitious religions.

Apart from the common meaning of the term (slave-trafficking and slave-holding), slavery has many manifestations. As appalling as was the traffic in human beings this was just one manifestation of man's complete enslavement under the curse of sin and death. We will highlight some of these.

The Slavery of Toil

Through a combination of rigor and good luck many have succeeded in making the earth bloom, but

All Scripture references are taken from the King James Version, unless noted otherwise.

the cost has been high for most who tried. This effort to bring forth food from the soil has consumed centuries of hard labor and has condemned millions to short and brutal lives. This enslavement to the land — which still continues in many Third World countries — has deprived mankind of education and progress, a situation which has changed only relatively recently.

Beginning around the end of the 18th century, in what is Scripturally termed the “time of the end,” wide-ranging improvements in technologies and machinery have given man the tools to tame his planet. The net result for many — especially those who benefitted from the Industrial Revolution of the late 18th and 19th centuries — has been a reduction in effort and an increase in free time, thus opening up the opportunities for learning and self-improvement that we take for granted today.

Social and National Slavery

When language was confused at Babel (Gen. 11: 1-9), there began a general partitioning of the human family. Individual, distinct societies, bound not only by a unique tongue but by the increasing unity of ideas and preferences began to take shape. Each group developed its own approach to the regulation of its members. Through a variety of legal systems and moral codes, individuals were bound to their group. Friction between different and competing groups generated rivalries and — all too often — wars. History attests to the warlike nature of the social order around the world.

National pride, patriotism, a noble quality in itself when attached to a generally benign and charitable society, works wickedness when allied to a brutal and self-serving regime. Imperial Rome under Nero and Nazi Germany at the height of their conquests are well-known examples. When any people are so attached to their group or nation as to sacrifice themselves for it in any cause — though unjust — they are enslaved, and frequently carry out frightful deeds. The events in Rwanda of a few years ago illustrate the point, as do the more recent killings — “ethnic cleansings” — of the Balkans.

Cultural Slavery

It has been said that we may choose our own friends but that God chooses our neighbors. Nor do we exercise choice when it comes to our culture. At birth we inherit — and in our formative years, develop — a point of view which lasts a lifetime.

Societies have built into their culture practices which have come to be accepted without question. The

former slavery of the Old and New Worlds, the apartheid of South Africa, the infanticide of modern China — cultural practices which, until relatively recently, enjoyed the acceptance of the national consensus are further examples of cultural bondage.

The set of preferences and behaviors we call our culture very often get in the way of our appreciation of other peoples and their points of view. We can become enslaved by the collective habits of those around us. This was certainly true in the ancient Grecian world, the culture of which had a profound effect — for good and ill — on the early Church. Though it was the cultural setting in which the Gospel was spread throughout the Mediterranean world, Greek philosophy (the ideas of Plato) and religion (the cult of the goddess, Isis) nonetheless created obstacles to the new faith. See Acts 16: 12, 16-21; 17: 15-34; 1 Cor. 1: 22, 23.

Israel an Example

The ancient nation of Israel, proud of its theocracy, kept itself isolated from the Gentile states around it. Although to some extent this attitude was warranted by the exclusive relationship that the nation had with its covenant God (Amos 3: 2), it lost sight of the reason for God’s dealings with it as a unique people and became a poor example to the countries around it. Whenever Israel adopted the ways — culture — of the heathen, it suffered calamities, and tumbled into disgusting practices of religion and behavior (Ezek. 43: 2, 7-9). Eventually, it kept its belief in its own exclusivity but abandoned its compassion for outsiders, for which Jesus condemned the Jewish leaders (Matt. 23: 13). (See the January 2000 issue regarding the Jews’ relations with the Samaritans.)

So enslaved had the nation become to the notion of its own uniqueness that it lost sight of its imperfection, and thus its need for redemption. Consequently, when the Messiah came, it utterly failed to recognize Him (John 1: 10, 11).

Religious Slavery

Religion is a fruitful field for strife. How one worships God has been a matter for regulation from time immemorial. Disparate societies have fashioned their own religious codes and practices and have frequently gone into battle to defend them and — when victory permitted — to impose them on others. The highest and best adherents of any religion are often so convinced of the rightness of their own belief that they are prepared to enforce their way at any cost.

Without a recognition of one's own sinfulness it is impossible to gauge the distance between the Creator and His Creation. For if God's crowning creation, Man, was pronounced "very good" at his introduction (Gen. 1: 31), it would be true to say that he is now deeply flawed.

The cruelty of the Crusades throughout the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries is a mocking testimony of the "Christianity" of its combatants. The abhorrent practices of a torturing and persecuting church in the Dark Ages were the result of a system that had become addicted to its own power and authority — an enslavement which cost the rest of the world dearly, plunging it into a long period of ignorance and backwardness.

To those in bondage to their creed, condemnation of the dissenter or "nonconformist" came easily (see opposite page). Jesus told His disciples that they would be persecuted by those who believed they were doing God service (John 16: 1, 2; Acts 20: 28-30). Even today, many find it easy to condemn to eternal torture or disfellowshipment those who differ with their own view of religious doctrine. This is true in the larger religious world, in which Catholic is set against Protestant, Moslem against Jew, and in the narrower sphere of the Evangelical Christian community where, often, fixed opinions refuse to consider an alternative interpretation of, for example, the doctrine of hell. Many Christians regard hell as an eternal form of torment which in some way vindicates God's justice and righteousness and vigorously oppose those who hold to a different interpretation of Scripture. (See our October issue dealing with the Parable of the Rich Man in Hell.)

Of course, the basic Scripture teachings of man's fall and redemption through the blood of Christ are the common beliefs of a Biblical Christianity. All believers in Christ are brethren, for all are justified by faith. This is the simple truth which liberates all believers from the condemnation of sin (Acts 16: 30-31).

Spiritual Slavery

The most pernicious form of bondage, and the one that goes unrecognized by most of its victims, is spiritual. "There is none righteous, no not one," declares Scripture (Rom. 3: 9-12; 5: 12).

The effects of sin are many, and all are enslaving. We have enumerated many of them above. But spiritual slavery is the worst of all because it results in alienation from God, the only One who is able to liberate the captive. Just as national Israel and most of its constituent members failed to recognize their fallen, sinful condition and their need of a Savior, so most of mankind are similarly blinded.

Without a recognition of one's own sinfulness it is impossible to gauge the distance between the Creator and His Creation. For if God's crowning creation, Man, was pronounced "very good" at his introduction (Gen. 1: 31), it would be true to say that he is now deeply flawed. Six thousand and more years of death and dying and an ever-deepening condition of sin have brought mankind to a pathetic state.

Freedom from Slavery

Jesus is the great Emancipator. He declares (John 8: 31-36), "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Peter's sermon at Pentecost, recorded in Acts chapter 2, elicited the query, "what shall we do?" from those who were "pricked" in their hearts — troubled in conscience (v. 37). Peter's first instruction was that they should repent.

Without oversimplifying, we may assume that there are at least four steps one must take on the path to freedom from sin:

1. *Recognize one's sinfulness and hate it.*
2. *Repent for it.*
3. *Accept Jesus as one's Lord and Savior.*
4. *Live a reformed life.*

This is the beginning of freedom. For the diligent Christian, freedom opens up on many fronts. And in just as many ways as one may have been enslaved, so one is gradually liberated.

To the faithful student of the Word many fears fall away, for perfect love "casteth out fear" (1 John 4: 18). What fears? For example, the fear of an uncertain future, or the fear of being eternally alienated from God. The fear of eternal torment, the dread which has for centuries kept many otherwise dedicated Christians from enjoying their fellowship with God — this fear is obliterated by the light from God's Word, which teaches that hell is the unconscious condition of death. (See our leaflet, *What is Hell?*; free on request.)

English Nonconformists and their Influence on America

The story of the first Thanksgiving begins in 1608, when a group of people called the Separatists, persecuted for forming a church apart from the Church of England, left their homeland to settle in Holland. . . . [T]here they found religious freedom, but also poverty and a secular culture.

After seeking God's guidance, the English Separatists — later called the Plymouth Pilgrims — sailed from Holland in 1620 on the Mayflower. Faith played a vital role in the formation of this nation.

In the Mayflower Compact that was signed by all, the first government of the people and by the people in America was set up. This formed a precedent for the principles embodied later in the new state and federal constitutions of independent America.

The well-known nonconformists George Fox, founder of the Quakers, John Bunyan, Richard Baxter and . . . other laymen and many clergy no longer found in the Anglican church the religious freedom that had existed for a while. Harsh penalties were imposed for attending religious services and having practices that did not conform. Thousands of dissenters went into hiding or were imprisoned. John Bunyan wrote *Pilgrim's Progress* while imprisoned. William Penn became one of the most active champions of the Quaker movement and Quakerism became an expanding force in colonial America. . . .

— From *The Review*, 1998

* * *

The Plymouth Colony, Massachusetts. — As with most communities starting on a religious basis, the methods of the Pilgrim colony were at first communistic. The capital for starting the colony had been advanced by the Merchant Adventurers — a commercial undertaking, whose profits were to be derived from the sale of beaver-skins, timber, etc., collected and sent over by the colonists. The Plymouth settlement agreed that all the profits of trade and labour were to be held in common till the end of seven years, and no individual enterprise could be started by the planters for their own benefit. The land-system was completely communistic, all the land being the property of the community and all the labour expended on it being for the common good. The people were conscientious and public-spirited, full of sympathy and mutual helpfulness, but, in spite of this, their honest effort at communism broke down. Men disliked the fact that their wives had to work for other men, and complained that, as they could not command the labour of their own servants, the servants that they had brought with them were a burden without corresponding compensation. In the spring of the third year each man was given a small plot of corn-growing land for himself. The allotment was only for present use, not for inheritance; but the value of the additional incentive was at once felt. The men worked harder, and women and children went willingly to work on their own piece of land.

The following summary of the economic system of Plymouth Plantation is supplied by C. W. Eliot:

The Pilgrims were plain, labouring people who all worked with their hands and expected to get their living as 'planters.' They made their living by farming, fishing, hunting, and practising the elementary trades of a new settlement. . . . They sailed from England under articles of agreement which were to govern the proceedings of a (joint-) stock company, the shares of which were held by two classes of persons, one called 'adventurers' and the other 'planters.' The adventurers merely put capital into the outfitting of the expedition. The planters were persons who crossed the ocean and were to bear the hardships and labours of the expedition. The planters might or might not put capital into the venture. Some did acquire shares in the joint-stock company as adventurers by putting in money or money's worth in goods: but the greater part did not hold shares except as planters. Every planter aged sixteen years and upwards received on going a single share in the stock company rated at ten pounds. A planter who carried with him his wife and children or servants was allowed a share in the company for every person sixteen years old and upwards and for every two children between ten and sixteen years old. Every child under ten who went in the ship was to receive in the ultimate division of the holdings of the company fifty acres of unmanured land. All the planters were to be fed and clothed out of the common stock and goods of the company. Each planter was to work four days in each week for the company, and two for himself and family. At the end of seven years each planter, head of a family or a group, should own the house and garden land occupied by him and his. The undertaking entered into on these terms was a strong case of co-operation and co-operative management for a short term of years, with acquisition by every head of a family, at the end of that short term, of a house and garden (*The Road toward Peace*, p. 169 f.).

For the protection of the colony, every able-bodied citizen was expected to bear arms. Every youth learnt the use of the simple weapons which were then available for the chase and for war. The Pilgrims started the New England muster and military system, prototype of the admirable military organization of republican Switzerland (*ib.* p. 174).

In the fourth year the communal system was still further abandoned. A piece of land was granted in perpetuity to each family in the proportion of one acre to every person, as near to the town as might be. Gradually room had to be made for the encouragement of enterprise in the collection of furs. In 1626 the Merchant Adventurers sold their rights in the plantation to Isaac Allerton and some associates for £1800. All 'heads of families and able young men of the colony' then became partners. The land and cattle were divided, and each received by lot twenty acres of land. Bradford, Allerton, Standish, Winslow, Brewster, and three others accepted responsibility for the debts of the colony, and hired the trade of the whole community for a term of years to enable them to discharge the debts. The community then definitely broke with its communistic tradition and entered on that capitalistic phase of social organization which is still an outstanding feature of American life.

— From *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. X, pp. 32, 33

THE SAVIOR OF ISRAEL, THE SAVIOR OF ALL

We tend to the thought that Jesus was born, not in December, but in October; but this is, perhaps, immaterial. What matters is that the child conceived by the Heavenly Father in Mary was to become the Savior, the long-awaited Messiah for the Jews. As we have seen, the Jews did not, as a whole, accept Him. This did not change His mission, which was to “save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1: 21). This was the kind of deliverance the Jewish nation needed if they were to be truly free. However, the Jews’ notion of freedom was that they be lifted from under the military heel of the Romans. “We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel,” spoke one of those on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24: 21). Had their Messiah come riding behind a fine horse in a chariot of war, He would have been acclaimed by His people, Israel. But such earthly glory and power was not the object in view for Jesus.

Jesus the Jew

Born a Jew, raised a Jew among Jews, Jesus understood Jewish ways and customs. He loved His people and would have taken them to His bosom (Matt. 23: 37). Misled as they were by their leaders, the people rejected His claim on them and reviled and persecuted Him unto death (Luke 24: 19, 20; Acts 3: 17, 18).

John tells us that Jesus “came unto his own and his own received him not” (John 1: 11). Humbly born, in a small town, Jesus stooped from His princely state and took upon Himself the form of a slave (Greek, *doulos*; Phil. 2: 7, 8). He became a man, a Jew, one of Abraham’s seed and lived among his brethren (Heb. 2: 16). Though living in a sinful world, He was sinless (2 Cor. 5: 20, 21). He who was rich, for our sakes became poor (2 Cor. 8: 9).

As the lovely Christmas carol, *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*, puts it, Jesus was

*Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.*

It was to lift mankind from the grovelling slavery of sin that Jesus left the glory which He had with the Father and took on the condition of a slave. “For this cause,” said He, “came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth” (John 18: 36, 37). And, again: “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for

many” (Matt. 20: 28). The Apostle Paul, in his epistle to Timothy (1 Tim. 2: 4-6) assures us that the “many” equals “all.” That is, Jesus came not only to redeem His people Israel from the curse of the law by dying on a “tree,” but He died to redeem all humanity, all who will receive Him. “I, if I be lifted up [on the cross] from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12: 32; brackets ours). The Truth to which He bore witness was the fact of His redemptive ministry. He was not merely a social activist as some claim; nor was He merely a philosopher who expounded liberating ideas. Yes, His words and actions certainly created social upheaval and He spoke words which had never before been heard (John 7: 46). But more than this, Jesus was the sacrifice through which man could be reconciled to God, the antitype of the ram caught in the thickets in the allegory of Abraham and Isaac (Gen. 22: 1-13).

Gospel Age Royalty

During the Gospel or Church Age those who became footstep followers of Jesus were inducted into the heavenly Divine calling, through begetting by the holy spirit (2 Pet. 1: 4; James 1: 18). While He was with them, Jesus had promised His 12 disciples that, if faithful, they would become kings, each one sitting on a throne, judging the 12 tribes of Israel (Matt. 19: 28, 29; Luke 22: 28-30). Indeed, they would even judge angels (1 Cor. 6: 2, 3). Such exaltation could not come to them without their own sacrifice, too. But Jesus had gone before; it was He who had already “overcome the world” (John 16: 33).

This band of Christians during the Gospel Age was a comparatively small one — 144,000. Termed the “little flock” in Luke 12: 32, they would win the prize of the high calling, the “crown” of life — Divine nature (1 Cor. 9: 24, 25; Phil. 3: 14; 2 Tim. 4: 7, 8). Thus they would become kings, with Jesus the chief King (1 Tim. 6: 15; Rev. 1: 5, 6; 5: 9, 10).

This kingly band has as its chief mission to restore mankind itself to kingship — the image and likeness of God that humanity was originally endowed with in father Adam. To this end there must be a kingdom established. Not a kingdom of the heavens only, for such would be unattainable for the majority of mankind who do not have the qualifying faith. No, the kingdom is also to be established *on earth* — a real, day-to-day kingdom, attainable and understandable by its subjects, the world of mankind.

It is this kingdom which is prayed for eloquently every Sunday in the churches: “Thy kingdom

come. Thy will be done in earth, *as it is in heaven*" (Matt. 6: 10; italics ours). Only in this kingdom is God's will to be done *in earth*, for God's will cannot be done in this sin-defiled dominion of which Satan is the princely ruler (John 12: 31; 14: 30; Eph. 2: 2).

The parable of the Sheep and Goats (Matt. 25: 31-46) portrays Jesus as the great King and His Church as the mighty angels. The dividing of the sheep from the goats typifies the ongoing discrimination between the faithful and the unfaithful, a process which will occupy hundreds of years, for the Kingdom is to be 1,000 years long — the Millennium (Rev. 20: 1-4). (See our October 2000 issue, a copy free on request.)

The Kingmaker

As each one chooses the path of righteousness, he or she will move toward kingliness — up toward the image that Adam and Eve had at their creation.

In medieval times powerful barons in England often determined who sat on the throne. One such, Richard Neville, the earl of Warwick (1428-1471), was styled "kingmaker." During this period, in unifying Western Europe under the Roman Catholic Church, the Pope, spiritual head of the church became himself a powerful civil ruler and could make or break thrones. In today's politics there are those who behind the scenes operate the levers of power and help to install and maintain a nation's leaders in office. Such are modern throne-makers and breakers.

But compared with the righteous power and influence of Jesus, all such are puny. Jesus is the true kingmaker. He is able to deliver even to the "uttermost" (Heb. 7: 25). As another hymn puts it:

*Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.
From north to south mankind will meet
To pay their homage at his feet;
While all the world shall own the Lord,
And savage tribes attend his word.
To him shall endless prayer be made,
And endless praises crown his head,*

*And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou has found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end
— Luke 1: 30-33*

*His name like sweet perfume shall rise
With ev'ry morning sacrifice.*

*People and realms of ev'ry tongue
Shall praise his name with sweetest song,
And loud their voices shall proclaim
Honor and blessings on his name.*

— No. 138, *Hymns of the Millennial Dawn*

From pole to pole! Indeed a world kingdom, an empire of unimaginable glory! Not a warring, contentious kingdom, but a glorious place for eternal habitation by perfect, happy beings. This will be the realization of the promise intended for Adam.

The book of Isaiah contains two very important prophecies relative to our theme. One is contained in chapter 9 (vs. 6, 7) and is quoted frequently during the Christmas season:

*For unto us a child is born,
unto us a son is given: and the
government shall be upon his
shoulder: and his name shall be
called Wonderful, Counsellor;
The mighty God, The everlast-
ing Father; The prince of Peace.*

*Of the increase of his gov-
ernment and peace there shall be
no end, upon the throne of
David, and upon his kingdom,
to order it, and to establish it*

*with judgment and with justice from henceforth
even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will
perform this.*

The other passage of note is chapter 35 in which we read of the setting up of the "highway of holiness" (v. 8). Along this way the willing and obedient will travel, justified by the blood of Christ, up to perfection and everlasting life. As verse 10 states eloquently:

*The ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with songs and everlast-
ing joy upon their heads: they shall obtain
joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing
shall flee away.*

Such a prospect! Such a salvation — one fit for a king!

We wish all of our readers a blessed holiday season.

* * *

BIBLE QUESTION BOX



Q A reader sent us the following letter:

I take issue with your article “Christianity Stopped Slavery!” [July, *Bible Standard*, page 52, left column, excerpt from Epiphany Volume 12, *The Bible-Ed.*] Perhaps, but only after Christians engaged in it for hundreds of years. People were burned at the stake for 300 years, genocide was committed against native Americans, Puritans sold the remaining natives to Spanish Christian slavers, Jews were slaughtered and today children are murdered (by abortion), all by “Christians.” The role of the church and churchgoers in the slaughter of people over the centuries is well documented.

[Signed]

A The points raised by the writer of this letter are well taken. History does indeed prove that vast injustices have been committed by those who claimed to be Christians. Christian has been set against Christian; Christians have persecuted to death unbelievers, and *vice versa*.

The writer of the article from which we took our extract, Paul S.L. Johnson (the Editor of this journal from its founding in 1920 to 1950), was well aware of the effects of persecution. He was born and raised a Jew and suffered ostracism from his family on his conversion to Christianity. He well knew that the abuses referred to by the writer of the letter had taken place. Such actions he in no way defended. It was not his claim, nor ours, that Christianity had not been culpable in these respects. However, it is safe to say that the terrors of the past cannot be laid at the door of *Christ's* Christianity.

Jesus said “[T]he Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them” (Luke 9: 54-56). Again, in His profession before Pilate, Jesus said that His kingdom was “not of this world,” else “*would my servants fight*” (John 18: 36). His was not a military or belligerent mission. It is to the shame of many of His followers that they did not keep His spirit.

Nominal Christianity Replaced the True

The perversion of Christianity into sects and denominations warped the pacifist message of Christ. Additionally, the introduction of doctrinal errors, such as

eternal torment and the element of fear which such a teaching propagated, encouraged the growth of a sadistic and persecuting streak in the otherwise commendable institutions which allowed such policies to be implemented by the cruel and uncouth.

The “battle for souls” was one reason for these crimes. Additionally, God’s adversary, Satan, was behind much of the mischief. As the great perverter of truth, Satan was largely responsible for the “divide and hunt down” mentality of a Christian church which had become weak and worldly. It was never Satan’s wish to see the Church of Christ prosper — the blacker the name he could give it, the better as far as he was concerned.

In more recent times, as a result of the prophesied advancing Biblical light and a return to a more vigorous Christianity — particularly since the Reformation — a more compassionate social streak has emerged. This owes much to the closer application of Biblical principles as a remedy for social ills. Beginning in the late 1700s social reformers on both sides of the Atlantic tackled problems of child labor, alcoholism, working conditions of factory employees and miners, the elderly, the physically and mentally handicapped — much of it from a Christian point of view.

Organizations such as The Salvation Army and the Young Men’s [and Women’s] Christian Association sprang from a Christian concern for the disadvantaged. Christians such as Lyman Beecher, Harriet Beecher Stowe, William Lloyd Garrison, Granville Sharp, Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce, campaigned vigorously and successfully against the slave trade. However, it took some years for this evil to be officially abolished in the Christian sphere of influence. Many social ills, such as wholesale abortion, still continue and are likely to do so until Christ’s Kingdom is established — the theme of this issue.

Christianity in practice is not perfect. It cannot be when its practitioners are imperfect. As individual Christians we must strive to be simple, pure, and to be peacemakers, as Jesus taught (Matt. 5: 9).

* * *



Dear Mr. Hedman: I am writing to thank you for your letter and to thank you and LHMM for sending me the material I requested. I started right in on *The Divine Plan of the Ages* book but I am taking my time with it. I've put away all of my library books that I was reading and am devoting my reading time to study the Word once more. I've always believed the Word of God is the strongest foundation to build on.

I am currently reading one study a day and looking up the Bible chapters that are referred to in each study. If you have any suggestions on how I might gain more understanding from my reading I'd be happy to hear from you. I just want you to know that I am putting all the material you have sent me to good use. I appreciate your kindness in providing me with this chance to find myself again. Your books and leaflets have helped me to open my self up. Once again I just want to say thank you.

Sincerely, C.S., Maryland

Dear Brother,

I am presently reading the six "Bible keys" and seem to have any questions answered as I progress. At this point I am reading Volume 3. My belief until now was that the prophecy of Revelation was yet to come. How could I not look at the years from the Apostles till now? I always wondered why God was so quiet and uninvolved with the dealings of earth. Also, I never really believed in hell, but did believe that the soul of man would not die. I have found a pearl in a field, and must now rush to sell all I have, and buy the field!

Blessings, K.G., Mass.

To *The Bible Standard*:

I found one of your books, *The Time is at Hand*, and I picked it up and read it and then read it again. I'm still going over it because it's so encouraging and very uplifting. I have been refreshed and spiritually renewed. I just came across the first volume where I was able to get your address and the list of your books — I need to read more of

these! Let me also ask you to please send me the next book, Volume 3, and any tracts you can. Also, I would like to request the *Daily Heavenly Manna*. Thank you. I look forward to staying on your mailing list.

Sincerely, O.S., Texas

Hi people of LHMM!

I recently received the books *The Divine Plan of the Ages* and "God" from you. Thank you also for the October issue of *The Bible Standard*. I have really learned a lot from your literature. How great the Almighty is! I have not believed in eternal torment for a long time, because of my own study. People condemn persons like Adolf Hitler because of all the people he tortured and say it's inhumane what he did. But they think nothing of it to paint our God as inhumane. It's a sad situation. I also had doubts about the Trinity. I could not believe in what I could not understand. The book *God* made me see how one can read things into the text. Now I am ready to read more. Please send me the books *The Time is at Hand* and *The Bible* and the booklet *The Revised Standard Version of the Bible Examined*. I do a lot of reading, but being my interest is in the Bible I do not read secular books or magazines, except for encyclopedias. I was wondering if there is any type of volunteer work you may have? Thank you again and God bless all of you.

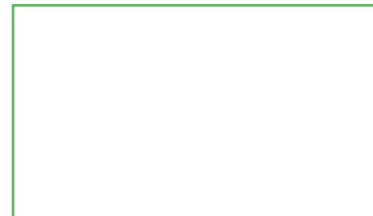
R.D., Michigan

* * *

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 . . .

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announcements . . .

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DEATH NOTICES

Sister Margaret Burge of Carnforth, Lancashire, England, died Friday, October 13 of natural causes. She was 88 and had been in the Truth for 30 years. Measurably isolated in recent years, she attended conventions when she could. Her husband, Albert, died 19 years earlier. She is survived by several children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Sister Susan Tennuchi of London, England, died Sunday, October 29 of pulmonary embolism, while attending the Sheffield Convention. She was 51 and had been consecrated since 1962. She leaves behind a husband, Alan, a son (Joel), three daughters, and six grandchildren.

We extend our condolences to the bereaved families along with a prayer that they are comforted by the promises of the resurrection.

MEMORIAL DATE FOR 2001

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

GENERAL CONVENTIONS

At-a-glance

U.S.

Oklahoma, Nov. 17-19; **2001** — California, Feb. 17-19; Florida, March 16-18; Massachusetts, April 28-30

Nigeria

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

Details

United States

Tulsa, Oklahoma, November 17, 18, 19 (Fri.-Sun.)

Site: Tulsa Sheraton Hotel, 10918 E. 41st Street, Tulsa, OK 74146; telephone (918) 627-5000. *Rates and Reservations:* \$64.00 flat rate. Call hotel for details.

Riverside, California, February 17, 18, 19 (Sat.-Mon.)

Site: Holiday Inn, 3400 Market Street, Riverside, CA 92501
Rates and Reservations: \$72.00, double occupancy, plus tax; limousine service provided from Ontario Airport; reservations should be made early through the Riverside Class Secretary, Mrs. Mary Detzler, 6941 Abel Stearns Avenue, Riverside, CA 92509-6350; telephone (909) 779-0331.

SERVICES BY VISITING MINISTERS

Carl W. Seebald

Tulsa Convention, November 17, 18, 19

Ralph Herzig

Tulsa Convention, November 17, 18, 19

Robert Herzig

Springfield, Massachusetts, December 3

Richard Blaine

Tulsa Convention, November 17, 18, 19

Waycross, Georgia, December 17

Jan Wojnar

Auburn, Massachusetts, November 12

John Detzler

Boulder, November 25, 26

Leon Snyder

Minneapolis, November 4, 5

Tulsa Convention, November 17, 18, 19

Muskegon, Michigan, December 10

Baron Duncan

Calgary, Canada, November 10, 11, 12

Minneapolis, November 14, 15

Tulsa Convention, November 17, 18, 19

Evangelists' Services

Daniel Herzig, Keystone Heights, Florida, November 12

Donald Lewis, Riverside, California, December 2, 3

John Hanning, Chester Springs, Pennsylvania, December 3

Robert Branconnier, New Haven, Connecticut, December 17

Edward Tomkiewicz, Muskegon/Grand Rapids, Michigan,

November 11, 12

Harold Solomon, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, December 10