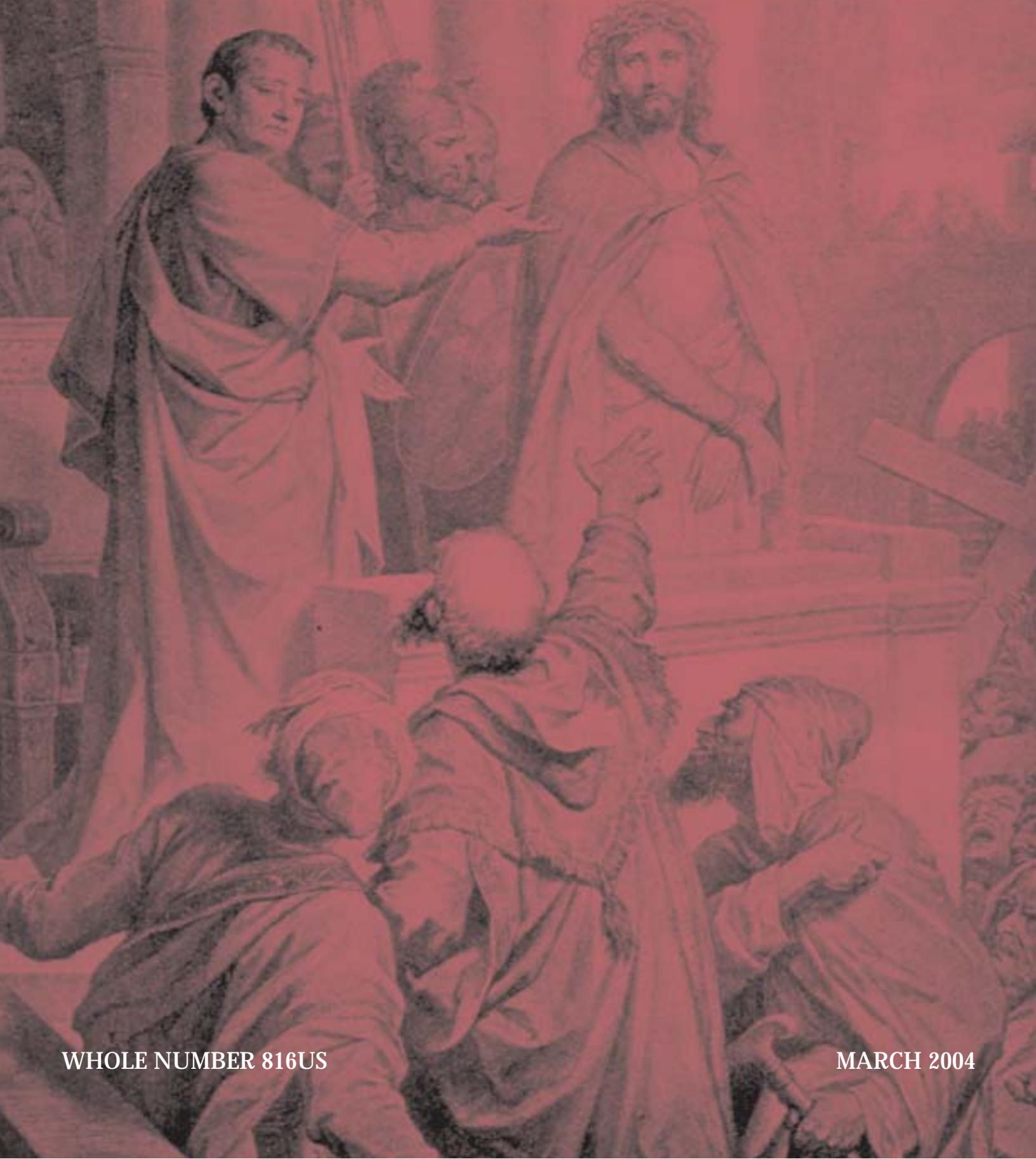


The Bible Standard



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The Real Jesus

“THE PASSION,” the well-advertised motion picture about the crucifixion of Christ, has drawn a lot of compliments and criticisms from around the country. Scheduled to be shown in U.S. cinemas beginning February 25, and in the rest of the world during March and April, the production is the work of Mel Gibson, the Australian-American actor, and is a personal expression of his conservative Catholic faith. Gibson has personally financed about half of the film’s cost of \$30 million. Before showing it to journalists he screened it before many church leaders and Christian groups to help advertise the film by word of mouth. The film’s dialogue is in Latin and Aramaic, with subtitles supplied.

Despite its apparently unrelenting violent scenes, the film has been praised by some Christian organizations who expect it to be an effective tool for conversion. It has been condemned by some Jewish groups who fear that the film will stimulate anti-Jewish sentiment here and abroad. Gibson maintains that the production merely recounts the Biblical presentation accurately and depicts the enormity of Christ’s sacrifice.

Anti-Semitism

Anti-semitism is on the rise in the U.S. and Europe. The European Commission recently convened a special session to address the problem. Attacks against Jews, synagogues, and Jewish interests in Europe have been increasing over the past few years, in part due to the large-scale immigration from Moslem countries and the rise of radical right-wing nationalism, which holds that Jews are conspiring to dominate the world through finance and political ideology.

The policies of the Israeli government and its treatment of the Palestinians, which many perceive as harsh and inhumane, have been used as an excuse by radical elements in Europe to retaliate against all Jews, regardless of political affiliation. A long-standing problem, which reached its

nadir in the death camps during the Second World War, anti-semitism has rested on the flimsy basis that the Jews were responsible for the death of Jesus. This narrow attitude ignores the reality of Christ’s resurrection: *Jesus did not remain dead. By His resurrection* He secured forgiveness of sin for all who come to God through Him — including the Jews.

Born a Jew — Died a Jew

It was for His beloved people Israel that He was crucified, nailing their transgressions to the cross (Col. 2: 14; Rom. 2: 9-11). To hold the Jewish people today guilty of Deicide is to miss the point of salvation. It was necessary that Christ die, no matter how this came about, for without His death, there could be no salvation — no deliverance from the curse of sin and death.

This curse, which is upon the whole world, Jew and Gentile alike, was caused by the sin of the first man, Adam, in Eden. The glimmer of hope offered to Adam and Eve in God’s promise that the “seed of the woman” would destroy Satan, was amplified in the promises given to Abraham and his progeny (Gen. 3: 15; 12: 1-3). It was in the development of the Jewish nation, chosen by God, that the promises were more clearly focused, especially in the writings of the prophets. To Israel were committed the oracles of God, the holy Scriptures. Coupled with the Hebrew writings, the New Testament gives the Christian the understanding of God’s plan of redemption. So the Christian’s faith has Jewish underpinnings. It seems strange that the Christian heart should not be grateful to a people who were used so effectively as the conduit for our present blessings.

As we contemplate the ministry and death of Jesus in the forthcoming religious seasons, let us rejoice in the wonderful and comprehensive breadth of this most amazing Sacrifice.

* * *

All Scripture references are to the King James Version, unless otherwise stated.

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

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Our Lord's Last Journey

"And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem."

— Luke 9: 51 —

HIS TIME WAS COME. Well aware of the prospect before Him, Jesus resolutely directed His steps and His thoughts to the place where shame and death would bring to a shocking conclusion His sacrificial course of three and a half years.

For Him, it was a lonely journey. True, the Twelve were with Him, and others who had gladly left all to follow the Master. He had told them plainly what would happen to Him in Jerusalem — that He would suffer at the hands of the Jewish leaders and be sentenced to death. Despised and rejected of men! But they had been slow to believe all those things written in the Law and the prophecies concerning Himself. Peter had even ventured to rebuke Him: *Master! do not talk that way — it is discouraging. God forbid that such things could happen to you!* (see Matt. 16: 22, 23).

Perhaps they believed what they *wanted* to believe. Their minds naturally took hold on the glorious things prophesied of the Messiah, and they were so thrilled to be associated with Him in His coming Kingdom that they regarded His talk of suffering and ignominy and death as very likely having some figurative meaning. So the Master suffered also the loneliness of being misunderstood.

Leaving Galilee

The time was come for Jesus to leave Galilee, the scene of so many mixed experiences, and it must be in sorrow. He would never return. Some faithful friends who remained there would grieve at the parting, but comparatively few who heard His message had responded with sufficient joy and conviction of heart and mind to change their lives. Galilee had rejected Him, as Judea had rejected Him.

At Nazareth, with all its happy memories of boyhood and His mother's home, they had treated Him with such violence and outrage that he could not visit it again. At Chorazin, Capernaum, and Bethsaida, on the green shores of that silver lake where He had performed deeds of mercy and preached the Gospel of the Kingdom in persuasive words of love — even here, men preferred the shallow traditions of a false sanctity and the dead letter of the Law, rather than the light and life offered by the Son of God.

Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. . . . It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day (Matt. 11: 21–24).

Woe indeed! The very generation that rejected Him was destined to suffer within 40 years the devastation of a Roman invasion which decimated the cities of Galilee. A few might then recall the woe pronounced by the Teacher of Righteousness, whom they had repudiated. And a few, perhaps, might reflect also on the gracious words that had proceeded out of His mouth (Luke 4: 22).

Encounters on the journey

The Bible account does not specify the exact route taken by Jesus and the disciples, nor are we told how many loyal disciples joined the band of travellers. Their journey may well have taken about two months, starting soon after the Feast of Tabernacles. They probably avoided Nazareth and came to the great Plain of Esdraelon by way of

Mount Tabor, Endor, and Nain. Evidently their journey took them to the foothills at the northern boundary of Samaria, and Jesus sent messengers ahead "to make ready for him" (Luke 9: 52) — to reserve rooms in a Samaritan village. The men returned to the travelling party in great indignation, having been refused hospitality.

These messengers may have been some of the Seventy appointed by the Lord to be missionaries, to go ahead and prepare the people for the forthcoming arrival of Jesus during His ministry in the cities and towns along the way. Though the account of the appointment of the Seventy in Luke's Gospel (chapter 10) follows the relating of the incident at the Samaritan village, it is unlikely that Jesus would leave such a major commission until His own ministry was drawing to a close. The precise order of events is not always necessary to know, and we are sufficiently



*The heartfelt thanks of the Samaritan
gained for him the healing not only
of his body, but of his soul also.*

*“Arise and go,” said Jesus,
“thy faith hath made thee whole.”*

blessed that faithful brethren, as they were moved by the holy spirit set down in the record significant occurrences.

Samaritans were of mixed blood, Jewish and Gentile, and regarded by the Jews as Gentiles. A Samaritan woman at the well in Sychar had observed during an earlier visit of Jesus and the disciples that “the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans” (John 4: 9). Yet on that occasion many received the Gospel. Jesus had stayed two days at Sychar, and many there gave witness to their faith: “We have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world” (John 4: 42).

But now, the circumstances were different. Jesus was travelling to the city they hated and the temple they despised. National animosity was inflamed to the point that they refused to supply the pilgrims the ordinary necessities of life. James and John in particular, resentful at the insult, desired to exact revenge. “Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?” (Luke 9: 54). Must the sons of thunder (Greek: *Boanerges*) be sons of lightning too? (Mark 3: 17). The Lord rebuked them: “You are not aware how much there is of pride and passion and personal revenge, covered under this pretense of zeal for your Master . . . You do not consider what a good spirit you should be of.”¹

Turning eastward from Samaria and taking the road through Peraea towards Bethshean, Jesus every day instructing those who travelled with Him, a touching incident occurred on the outskirts of one of the villages. A plaintive wailing cry arose, and at a distance ten lepers were seen. “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us” (Luke 17: 13). His compassion aroused for these frightful outcasts of society, Jesus healed them instantly. Leprosy, more than other diseases, was supposed by the Jews to be a mark of God’s displeasure, and Christ, who came to take away sin, took particular care for their cleansing.

Only one of the ten stirred himself to give thanks, kneeling before his Healer and glorifying God with a loud voice; and he was not a Jew, but a Samaritan. “But where are the nine?” Jesus asked in sorrowful surprise. Their physical bodies were indeed healed, yet the mercy of the Master had awakened no echo of gratitude in their still leprous hearts. But the heartfelt thanks of the Samaritan gained for him the healing not only of his body, but of his soul also. “Arise and go,” said Jesus, “thy faith hath made thee whole.”

Sabbath healings

As their journey continued, Jesus was not spared the taunts, the opposition, and the criticism of the “establishment” — those Pharisaical leaders of society who felt discomfited by His directness. His healing on the Sabbath was a major cause for complaint, and two such healings occurred on this last journey. The synagogues were not the Master’s chosen venues for the preaching of the Kingdom of God. Nor was He often welcome, but rather, regarded with caution and suspicion, though sometimes permitted to speak before the congregation.

On one such Sabbath occasion, Jesus entered and noticed a seriously handicapped woman who had been bent double for 18 years, and could not straighten herself. The compassionate heart of Jesus could not but respond to the mute appeal of her condition, and calling her over to Him, he said, “Woman, you are healed of your infirmity!” At His gentle touch, strength flowed into her bones and she stood upright, immediately glorifying God. The ruler of the synagogue was not pleased, and his tirade betrayed such stupidity and lack of logic as to arouse Jesus’ contempt. “*Hypocrite!*” The Lord’s castigation of such behavior — arising more from an in-built prejudice toward Himself than from a genuine defense of the Sabbatical Law — caused His adversaries to feel ashamed (Luke 13: 10–17).

Jesus’ association with publicans and sinners was another reason for the hatred of the Pharisees and those who resembled them in outlook. But not all of that ruling class closed their doors to this great Teacher. Either from genuine concern that His message was God-sent, or from motives of expediency, or perhaps with intent to pick some quarrel with Him, there were times when they appeared to welcome an audience with Him. Luke 14: 1–6 tells of an incident one Sabbath day when Jesus was invited to eat bread at the home of a Pharisee, and there was a man present who suffered from dropsy, doubtless brought along to test the Preacher’s reaction. They *watched* Him. Knowing their thoughts, Jesus took the initiative and asked them, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?” They *would* not say “Yes,” but *dared* not say “No.” A multitude of mixed motives and reservations kept them silent, and their inability to answer decided the controversy in His favor, so the man was healed. But the dropsy of their inflated self-satisfaction was a disease far more difficult to heal.

Jesus rejoices in spirit

During the long journey Jesus often taught in parables — the Great Supper, the Unjust Steward, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Piece of Silver, the Prodigal Son, the Rich Man and Lazarus, the Good Samaritan, and many more.

From time to time, the pairs of Evangelists He had sent out to prepare the way returned to Jesus and the Apostles to report on their ministry. They came joyfully, exclaiming with astonishment that “even the devils are

¹ Matthew Henry’s Commentary

subject unto us through thy name” (Luke 10: 17). Jesus offered up a solemn thanksgiving to His Father, and Luke sets down in the record that “*In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit*” (v. 21). Two things especially He gave thanks for: that the deep truths were hidden from the intellectuals and worldly wise; and that they were revealed to those who were as trusting as little children. Then turning to the Twelve, Jesus said quietly: “Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see” (v. 23).

As this last journey drew gradually to a close, there was a shadow of impending doom. “I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” (Luke 12: 50). It required all of the Lord’s three-and-a-half-year ministry to complete the consecration symbolized by His water baptism at Jordan, the tension and suspense increasing daily now, as He looked steadfastly towards Jerusalem, to His own destiny, and still beyond that, to the destiny of the world He had come to redeem.

Arrival at Bethany

It seems that the quiet village of Bethany was the Lord’s refuge during His visits to Jerusalem. Here lived His dear friends Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus, a family apparently in comfortable circumstances, whose love and reverence always placed at His disposal their holy and happy home. From there a pleasant walk over the Mount of Olives would take Him to the Temple.

John’s Gospel (10: 22) indicates that Jesus arrived at Bethany some time before the Feast of Dedication in late December, a festival founded by Judas Maccabaeus in honor of the cleansing of the Temple in 164. The other Gospel writers omit this detail, but it does suggest that Jesus, in setting His face towards Jerusalem, purposed to concentrate His ministry for His remaining weeks at the very heart of the chosen people of God. It was from Jerusalem that the pulse — the heart-throb of the nation, directed the lives and activities of all Israel, and fundamentally influenced the spiritual health or debility of a people who were ever fickle in their loyalties to a God who loved them for *their fathers’* sakes (Rom. 11: 28).

The eastern porch of the Temple still retained the name of Solomon’s Porch, possibly being built of materials which had formed part of the ancient Temple. Here, as the great Teacher walked through the bright colonnades, He could not fail to draw the crowd, and He was ready to give audience to any who might question Him. How long this ministry continued without interference, we are not told. The authorities were certainly aware of Jesus’ presence, and had their agents posted to keep daily watch, seeking any possible pretext for His arrest. Such a preacher was dangerous to their position, and must be silenced.

The time for speaking plainly

So the Jews gathered around with seemingly impartial and genuine inquiries, yet intending a crafty assault on His apparently irrefutable claim to be God’s Anointed One.

“How long dost thou hold us in suspense? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly” (John 10: 24, marginal reading).

How much of misgiving and dread lay behind their challenge? Was the struggle between their convictions, which told them Jesus was indeed the Christ, and their corruption, which said — No! — because He was not such a Christ as they had expected or desired? It was not at all that He had kept them in suspense, but that their own dismay must be laid to *His* charge. “*Tell us plainly.*”

The time had come for plain speaking. He reminded them that abundant evidence had been given — His works, His words, His miracles, His raising of the dead, were all accomplished as the Father’s Representative and by the Father’s power. “But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep.” Only the true sheep followed the Shepherd, and theirs would be the blessed inheritance of eternal life.

Then, it seemed, the trap was sprung: “*I and my Father are one.*” Christ’s unique oneness with the Father, that union of mind and purpose and will that marked the relationship of Jesus to the Almighty, should have commended Him as one truly sent by God. But the Jews saw at once that the words could be interpreted to mean infinitely more, and they took up stones for His immediate execution according to the Law. Yet His undisturbed majesty disarmed them. “Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?” “For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God” (John 10: 32, 33).

Jesus’ further clear reasoning in justifying His claim to be the Son of God only antagonized His critics further, but they dare not stone Him. His presence overawed them and they could only glare their hatred as He passed from among them. His time had not yet come. Some in Jerusalem did believe on Him during those days and weeks of witness, as later events were to prove, but to remain there was to imperil His life in vain. Judea had spurned Him, as Galilee had spurned Him.

The Lord’s wisest course was to retire to a safe distance. He therefore went beyond Jordan to the place where John had once baptized, and stayed some time. There many sought Him out, remembering that the Baptist had borne emphatic witness to Jesus in that very place, and they, too, became believers (John 10: 40–42).

The Raising of Lazarus

It was during the Lord’s time of exile from Jerusalem and its environs that news came of the desperate sickness of His dear friend Lazarus, with an implied appeal that He should come to Bethany. But Jesus delayed, and the disciples, in a dilemma, assumed at first that the danger to their Master’s life must keep Him away. Days passed, and Jesus seemed to know that Lazarus had died.

Yet He chose to go to Bethany. “Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?” But seeing He was determined to go, Thomas said to his

He stood at the entrance, and the others held back with indrawn breath as He cried with a loud voice: "Lazarus — come forth!"

fellow disciples: "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (John 11: 8, 16).

The importance of the family and the respect in which they were held meant that many eminent Jews were in attendance to console and mourn with the sisters. While some observed the tears in Jesus' eyes and acknowledged His affection for the dead Lazarus, others asked dubiously, even perhaps sneeringly, why Jesus, who reputedly performed miraculous cures, could not have saved His friend from death.

The tomb, like most graves belonging to the wealthy, was a recess hewn in a horizontal wall of rock with a stone slab to close the entrance. A dread chill ran down the spine of many a watcher, as Jesus commanded that the stone be removed. He stood at the entrance, and the others held back with indrawn breath as He cried with a loud voice: "Lazarus — come forth!" And from the rocky tomb there emerged a figure swathed in burial garments, health restored — tradition holds — for 30 more years of life, light, and love.

There were many witnesses of this miracle who believed when they saw it, but there were others who could only carry an alarmed and angry account of it to the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem, that supreme, judicial, ecclesiastical, and administrative council which would very soon exercise its power even over the Lord's Anointed. Henceforth, Jesus was living with a price upon His head.

Jesus was not ignorant of it. For the last few weeks of His earthly existence, till the due time had brought the Passover, at which He meant to lay down His life, He retired with His disciples to a small town near the wilderness, called Ephraim.

THE DAYS OF HOLY WEEK

God's Old Testament people, the Jews, and His New Testament people, the Christians, both have a festival in the springtime of the year. The Jewish festival is the Passover, while the Christian festival has come to be known as Easter. Originally this was the festival in honor of Eastr, or Ostara, the Teutonic goddess of light and spring, adopted by the Anglo-Saxons in the 8th century to celebrate instead the resurrection of Christ.²

The time of Passover was fixed exactly by Divine decree and was to be kept on the 14th day of the month Nisan, which was designated the beginning of the ecclesiastical year. It commemorated the Israelites' deliverance from slavery in Egypt, and on the evening of Nisan 14 each

year, every Jewish family would observe the solemn ritual described in Ex. 12.

It should be kept in mind that the Jewish day began at sunset — 6 o'clock in the evening, as based on the creative days of Genesis: "And the evening and the morning were the first day" (Gen. 1: 5; see also vs. 8, 13, 19, 23, 31).

From the heights of Ephraim, Jesus could observe the pilgrim bands at the approach of Passover, streaming down the Jordan valley towards Jerusalem. The time had come for Him to leave His hiding place, and He came down to the high road to join the great caravan of Galilean travellers. Going forth to His death, a greater majesty and splendor than ever before seen in Him kept the disciples in quiet awe. But as they paused for rest along the way, He told the Twelve again, with more terrible particulars than before, of the coming ordeal — how He would be betrayed to the Priests and the Scribes, condemned and handed over to the Gentiles, mocked, scourged, and — unthinkable horror — *crucified*. On the third day, He would rise again.

But their minds, full of Messianic Kingdom hopes, could not receive these warnings as factual. Their imaginations were of twelve thrones, and when the mother of James and John came to Jesus and begged that her sons might sit on either side of Him in His Kingdom, He bore it with resignation. In their blindness they had asked for that position which, a few days later, they would see occupied by two crucified robbers.

Saturday evening, Nisan 9 begins

Jesus did not intend to make Jerusalem His resting place during the few days until Passover, but chose to stay in the beloved home at Bethany. The earlier Gospel writers appear to have exercised some caution in telling of an incident that evening, mentioning "a certain woman" and referring to a supper at the house of "Simon the leper." At that time the life of Lazarus was in danger (John 12: 10), and there may have been a need to protect the family's privacy for years afterwards, which no longer prevailed by the time the Apostle John wrote his own account.

Only John implies that it was in her own home that Mary anointed the feet of Jesus with a pound of costly spikenard, and wiped His feet with her hair. The disciples were guests also, and eyewitnesses. These men, humble Galileans for the most part, may have been amazed at the lavish gesture. But one, Judas Iscariot, with a show of piety to mask his avarice, hotly objected. Its value at three hundred pence may well have represented a year's labor, and so much money *wasted*, rather than put in the care of him that kept the bag, was more than he could bear.

With hindsight, John records that Judas was a thief (John 12: 1–8), and it appears that from this time he laid his plans to betray the Master (Matt. 26: 14–16; Mark 14: 10, 11). No events are recorded for the remainder of Nisan 9. The day after our Lord's anointing by Mary would corre-

² Davis's Bible Dictionary

spond to the Sunday of our calendar, now generally celebrated as Palm Sunday in the Christian world.

Sunday evening, Nisan 10 begins

This is the day of the Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, which actually took place on what would be our Monday morning, that date having commenced at 6:00 p.m. on the Sunday by Jewish reckoning. This was the proper day for the lamb to be taken into each household, ready for the Passover meal on Nisan 14 (Ex. 12: 3).

It appears that in spite of all that had recently happened, there was a general impression among the people that Jesus would still be in the city for the Passover, and an atmosphere of intense interest and expectation prevailed. Consequently, when it became known early that morning that He was coming, the excitement increased. He started out on foot, probably taking the main route over the Mount of Olives, then near Bethphage dispatched two disciples to bring to Him an ass and her colt, as yet unriden, which they would find tethered in the village. If the owner objected, they were to say, "The Lord hath need of them" (Matt. 21: 3). All was as He had said. The disciples put their garments on the colt for a makeshift saddle, lifted the Master upon him, and the triumphal procession set forth.

No sooner had He started than the multitude spread out their coats to carpet His path, adding boughs of palm, olive, and fir, and breaking into joyful shouts of "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

This was no defiant display, no seditious challenge to authority, intended to stir up political strife. It was an outburst of provincial joy, the simple exultation of poor Galileans and despised disciples. But the Apostles recalled in after days that it fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass" (Zech. 9: 9, ASV).

Jerusalem, the ancient city, the "golden" city, which now hailed him, would shortly turn on Him. He who had thus far shed no tear for His own sake, broke into a passion of lamentation, which wrung from His lips the heart-cry:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together; even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 23: 37-39).



Down in the city, some Pharisees were mingled among the crowd, and the joy of the people was galling to them. These Messianic cries and kingly titles were unseemly! "Master, rebuke thy disciples." Jesus answered: "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out" (Luke 19: 39, 40).

Approaching near to the Temple, the procession dispersed, and Jesus went in. The sacred place was sullied, usurped by droves of cattle, bargaining voices, and the clink of gold. Amid such desecration He would not teach, and with burning zeal He drove them out. Not until he had restored the Temple to decency and silence could he begin his ministrations. He healed the sick, taught those humble enough to listen, and amid the vain attempts of His enemies to hinder and annoy Him, passed the hours of that memorable day in tireless dedication to the work His Father had sent Him to do.

The Lamb of God had on this 10th day of Nisan been received gladly into the spiritual home of the nation. Only a few days remained before the true Passover would be accomplished.

Monday evening, Nisan 11 begins

Jesus most likely returned to Bethany on Monday evening, and at 6:00 p.m. Nisan 11 set in. It seems to have been on the following morning, Tuesday, that the somewhat strange episode of the barren fig tree occurred. Being hungry, Jesus noticed the solitary tree, but was disappointed to find no fruit. He thereupon pronounced its doom, and soon after it was seen to be withered. This was no miracle of unworthy anger, but a fitting symbol of the worthlessness of a nation whose professions of godliness brought forth no "fruit of good living."

No further details of this day's activities are given, but Luke tells us that Jesus taught daily in the temple, and though the Chief Priests and Scribes sought to destroy Him, they found no way, as the people were attentive to hear Him (Luke 19: 47, 48).

Tuesday evening, Nisan 12 begins

The authorities decided that something had to be done. An assembly was called and the chief priests, the scribes and the elders of the people met at the palace of Caiaphas, the High Priest. Afraid to arrest Jesus openly (for they feared the people), they discussed ways and means of taking him subtly and having Him put to death on some pretext. This would be best deferred until the Passover supper was over and the multitudes visiting the city for this event were on their journey home.

During their deliberations, a message reached them which presented an unforeseen expedient to their schemes. That disciple — *one of the Twelve!* — was ready to put an end to their perplexities and reopen with them the communication already made. That one who had lived with Jesus,

heard all He had said and seen all He had done, and was yet ready to betray Him, strengthened them in their purpose.

And this very day, Jesus still continued His Temple witness and confounded His critics, heedless now of the lurking danger.

Wednesday evening, Nisan 13 begins

That night, according to Luke, Jesus spent some time on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, the hush of that familiar spot a balm to His soul, as He drew strength from communion with His Heavenly Father for the ordeals to come. Back at the Bethany home He lay down for the last time on earth, waking on the Thursday morning, never to sleep again, except for His sleep in death.

On Thursday, withdrawn now from all public speaking, and spending the day in quiet seclusion, Jesus instructed His disciples as to the keeping of the Passover. He and the Twelve, as a family, were to partake, not in Bethany as they might have expected, but in Jerusalem. They were to follow a servant carrying a pitcher of water who would lead them to the house where a room was readily offered for the occasion. Whose house it was, we are not told, though some have conjectured that the owner was none other than Joseph of Arimathea. And there, they made ready the Passover meal.

Thursday evening, Nisan 14 begins — Passover

“With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer” (Luke 22: 15). As dusk gathered, Jesus and His disciples walked from Bethany to that large upper room where the table was spread and the cushions provided.

Sadly, even at this late hour in our Lord’s life, His closest companions caused Him grief. While supper was in preparation, He watched for a volunteer to perform the usual courtesy of feet-washing after the dusty walk, and none coming forward, Jesus took upon Himself this humble service. With what shame and awe they read into this act His gentle rebuke! But there was strife still, as to which of them

should be accounted the greatest, perhaps arising from their loving desire to be near to the Master at the table. Again His patient instruction gave them pause for thought, doubtless in later time valuable to their eternal profit.

We do not know positively that Judas remained during the further ceremony, the institution of the Lord’s Supper, though it seems likely that he was still present. At some point, the agony of His imminent betrayal impelled the Lord to declare in the hearing of all: “*One of you shall betray me!*” Alarm spread through the gathering, each one fearing that through some unforeseen weakness, some cowardly failing, he might be the guilty one.

The beloved disciple, John, seated close to the Master, asked Him, “Lord, who is it?” A sign was given him, and Judas Iscariot was identified as the traitor Apostle. “Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.” Judas went out immediately, and it was night (John 13: 21–30).

The Memorial of His Death

“Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. . . . This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many” (Mark 14: 22–24). “This do in remembrance of me” (Luke 22: 19).

The Apostle Paul later emphasized the deep significance of the Lord’s admonition: “This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me: (1 Cor. 11: 25). As oft — *every year as you keep the Passover* — remember the Lord’s death. No longer do the Lord’s people keep the feast to remember the deliverance from Egyptian slavery. The keeping of that feast was but the symbol, the picture, of a mightier deliverance. Jesus’ broken body and shed blood would in due time emancipate a race in slavery to sin and death. He was the Lamb of God, come to take away the sin of the world — come that they might have life abundant.

Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

* * *

KEEPING THE FEAST

“THIS DO, IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.” The proper observance of the Lord’s Supper — the Memorial of His death, was lost sight of for many centuries. Christians generally interpret the words “as often as ye do this” as authority for observing the Lord’s Supper frequently — as often as desired, and many churches hold weekly or monthly “Communion” or “Eucharist” services.

However, as Christ was referring to the Jewish Passover, an annual memorial, it seems clear that He saw His own death as introducing a new epoch when believers, Jewish and Gentile, would *once each year*; on the anniversary of His death, remember His sacrifice, using the symbols of bread and wine, as He did on the night He was betrayed, to represent His own broken body and shed blood.



We do not say that sin is committed by any untimely observance, nor that non-observance is in itself sinful. But honoring our Lord’s admonition, many Bible students keep this Feast only once a year, on the Biblical date, the evening of Nisan 14. This falls in 2004 on Friday, April 2nd, after 6:00 p.m. (see announcements).

All who accept Christ as Savior and have consecrated their lives to His service, are invited to participate. We shall naturally prepare ourselves, casting out any leaven of malice and wickedness, as faithful Israel purged their homes of leaven — a symbol of sin — before keeping their Passover (Ex. 12: 15; 1 Cor. 5: 7, 8). Let us, therefore, keep the Feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

* * *

Bernard W. Hedman, General Editor, Dies

We regret to announce the death, at age 79, of Bernard W. Hedman, the General Editor of this journal and our sister magazine, *The Present Truth*, and other publications of the Laymen's Home Missionary Movement (LHMM).

Pastor Hedman died in the Paoli, Pennsylvania hospital, on Friday, January 30. He had been in declining health for several months and was admitted to the hospital for examination; while there his condition deteriorated and he slipped into a semi-conscious state for several days before dying of multiple organ failure. A funeral service for Bro. Hedman was held at the chapel situated at our headquarters in Chester Springs, attended by about 90 mourners.

Pastor Hedman was born in 1924 in Republic, Michigan, to parents William and Aina Perttunen Hedman, both Finnish Lutherans. He was the youngest of 10 children. While living in Chicago he met his future wife, Betty; they married in 1944. In 1948, the couple moved to Philadelphia to help in the editing and publishing work at the headquarters of the LHMM, then under the supervision of Prof. Paul S.L. Johnson, Executive Trustee and Editor. When Bernard and Betty left to raise their expanding family, Bernard remained in active co-operation with the LHMM, assisting the next two Editors in the publishing work. In 1985 he succeeded to the office of Executive Trustee, General Pastor, and Editor, in which posts he served until his death.

Bro. Hedman is survived by his wife; two sons, Bradley and Mark; a daughter, Deborah; and son-in-law, Jack Zilch. His family and the staff at the headquarters miss him very much and are thankful for the years of service that he gave and in which they were privileged to co-operate. We pray that God will bless his memory.

The publishing work and other activities of the LHMM will continue, pending the installation of a successor to Bro. Hedman. A comprehensive review of Bro. Hedman's life, with photographs and tributes from around the world, will be published in the Winter 2004 issue of *The Present Truth*.



of interest . . .

According to American Broadcasting Company (ABC) News, 82% of Americans consider themselves Christian. Of those, 60% say they are Protestant, 25% say they are Catholic, and 15% say they are Christians of different kinds. Just 2% of the population practice the Jewish faith, less than 1% are Muslim, and 13% have no religion. 60% of Americans believe that the Bible is historical fact.

* * *

The European Commission is co-hosting a seminar with the European Jewish Congress in response to accusations of inaction and indifference. The unprecedented meeting follows evidence of a rise in anti-Semitic incidents within the European Union (EU).

Attacks on EU Jewish targets have caused alarm in the Jewish community. Nobel Peace prize-winner and Holocaust survivor, Elie Wiesel, has said he is deeply concerned about the problem. He is attending the Brussels meeting, along with senior religious leaders and politicians from Europe and Israel. The seminar was briefly postponed after Jewish leaders accused the EU itself and European Commission President Romano Prodi of fostering anti-Semitism. The charge angered Mr. Prodi, who was recently honored by European rabbis for his part in promoting what he calls "a Europe of diversity."

The European Jewish Congress has attributed what it calls "the growing hatred towards Jews in Europe" to unbalanced attitudes to the Middle East crisis. It wants systematic monitoring of anti-Semitic acts, tougher justice, and better education in schools to help combat the problem.

— *bbc.co.uk*

* * *

A senior Vatican envoy is to meet the head of the Russian Orthodox church in a move aimed at easing tensions between the two churches. The rare meeting was announced during German Cardinal Walter Kasper's visit to Moscow in February. In the past Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexy II has blocked Pope John Paul II's long-standing wish to visit Russia, accusing the Pope and Catholics of aggressive missionary activity in Russia and other predominantly Orthodox former Soviet republics. Last month he said ties with the Roman Catholic Church would have to improve before he would agree to a papal visit. Relations reached an all-time low two years ago, when Cardinal Kasper's visit was cancelled amid anger at the creation of four Catholic dioceses in Russia. But the Vatican insists its activities in the country cater largely for traditional Catholic minorities like Poles, Germans, and Lithuanians, who have faced discrimination and persecution in the past. The Vatican believes there are just 600,000 Catholics in Russia — or 0.4% of the population.

Cardinal Kasper expressed hope that the Catholic and Russian Orthodox Churches could solve their differences. "The Russian Orthodox and Catholic Churches have common values — humanitarian and Christian ones — and we want to co-operate in order to promote these values in Europe."

— *bbc.co.uk*



TAKING UP THE CROSS

Q Matt. 16: 24 reads, “Then Jesus said unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”

When Jesus spoke these words, did His disciples understand what He meant by the expression “take up his cross”?

A A *cross* is defined as an upright post with a transverse piece near the top, on which condemned persons were executed in ancient times. *Crucifixion* is defined as the act of execution on a cross.

Crosses were used by the Assyrians and Persians to display the heads of enemies or degraded criminals above the gateway into a city. Later they were used to crucify enemies of the state as a form of capital punishment. The Greeks and Romans first used crucifixion to punish slaves, but by the first century it was used for any enemy of the state, though a citizen could only be crucified by a decree from Caesar. Crucifixion was a public spectacle of shame and the Romans increasingly used it as a warning against crime. By Jesus’ time crucifixion was a common sight and undoubtedly the disciples were quite familiar with it. Before the crucifixion itself, the victim was forced to carry the cross at its crossbeam to the site of execution.

How Jesus Taught Cross-bearing

When Jesus taught His disciples, He often drew lessons from things His disciples were familiar with. Knowing they were familiar with crosses and crucifixion, He used the symbolic expression “take up his cross” and similar expressions to teach a lesson (see also Matt. 10: 38; Mark 8: 34; Luke 9: 23; 14: 27). Our text (Matt. 16: 24) expresses three different aspects of the Christian life. The second part, “take up his cross,” describes that part of the Christian life that has to do with subjecting one’s own will to the Lord’s will in service, especially amid trials and other untoward experiences. A cross is a fitting symbol showing how self-will is cut through by God’s perfect will, encouraging the obedient to submit to the Divine will. The poem, *Transverse And Parallel* in our *Poems of Dawn* book expresses it well:

*The will that runs transverse from Thine
Doth thereby make its cross;
Thine upright will cuts straight and still
Through pride, and dream, and dross.*

Jesus’ disciples learned about “cross-bearing” during His earthly ministry through His teachings and observing Him in His “cross-bearing” experiences. They could not have gained a full appreciation of it, however, until they too had laid down their lives in sacrifice and had gone through their own “cross-bearing” experiences. Such experiences are particularly designed by the Lord to strengthen, balance, and perfect character.

JESUS LIFTED UP

Q John 12: 32 reads, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” What is meant in this verse by our Lord’s expression, “lifted up”?

A The primary thought undoubtedly is our Lord’s crucifixion — His lifting up on the cross, as the great Sin-offering on behalf of “the sins of the whole world” (John 12: 33; 1 John 2: 2). It is as a result of this sacrifice that all the blessings which God has purposed and promised shall eventually come to all people. Until atonement for sin had been made, nothing could even be started that would eventually release them from the death sentence they are under.

Our Lord’s lifting up was symbolized by the lifting up of the brazen serpent by Moses in the wilderness (Num. 21: 9; John 3: 14, 15). By looking to it, the Israelites, bitten by the fiery serpents, were healed — illustrating how the world of mankind, bitten by sin, poisoned, and dying, may have life through faith in the Redeemer, based upon His great offering for sin — His Ransom Sacrifice for all mankind (See *The Bible Standard*, June 2002, p. 69, regarding Nehushtan/brazen serpent).

The Secondary Meaning

A secondary thought in this passage is that our Lord’s obedience in laying down His life as the Sin-offering led directly to His own exaltation to power and great glory. The Apostle has stated it, “Wherefore God hath highly

exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, . . . and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2: 9-11).

Because our Lord was lifted up in both of these senses, blessing will come to the world. His lifting up as the Sin-offering provided the purchase-price for both the Church and the world. Additionally, His lifting up in exaltation as the great Prophet, Priest, and King, is equally necessary to the future drawing of the world of mankind, and the resultant blessing upon all who yield to the drawing influence.

Drawing All Men is Yet Future

While considering this verse, it is important to understand what is meant by the “drawing.” The Scriptures assure us that Jesus is not drawing all men at the present time. On the contrary, Jesus indicated that during the present Age the *Father* does all the drawing. This is stated in John 6: 44: “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” That our Lord is not drawing all men to Himself at the present time is evident when we observe how many there are in the world who have never heard of the name of Jesus, much less have had a favorable influence toward Him.

The drawing by the Son will not begin until after the drawing by the Father has accomplished its intended purpose. That purpose is “to take out of them a people for his name” — to gather out of the world an elect Church to be Jesus’ joint-heirs, “members in particular” of His Body (Acts 15: 14; Rom. 8: 17; 1 Cor. 12: 27).

When this work of selecting the faithful of the present Age shall be completed, then the due time for the Son to “draw all men” — the rest of mankind — will have arrived. And just as the Father has been drawing the faithful during this Age, so the Son — His Church associated with Him in the work — will draw all men in the next Age — during His coming Kingdom, His Mediatorial Reign (Isa. 32: 1; Acts 3: 21, 22; 2 Tim. 2: 12).

The Church Also Lifted Up

It has required almost the entire Gospel Age to lift up, first the Head, and afterward the members of His Body, His joint-sacrificers, with Him. With the completion in death of the sufferings of every member of this honored company, down to the last one, this entire Body has through the power of the First Resurrection been lifted up in the secondary sense — that of exaltation. The world now awaits their revealing (Rom. 8: 19).

That our Lord by this expression, “lifted up,” meant more than His own crucifixion is evident from His words to the Jews, “When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he” (John 8: 28). The Jews do not yet know Him as the Messiah. Additionally, His words can apply to the lifting up — the figurative crucifying —

His lifting up as the Sin-offering provided the purchase-price for both the Church and the world. Additionally, His lifting up in exaltation as the great Prophet, Priest, and King, is equally necessary to the future drawing of the world of mankind, and the resultant blessing upon all who yield to the drawing influence.

of all the members of His Body, the Church (Rom. 6: 6, Gal. 2: 20; 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12).

“Drawing” Not by Compulsion

The future drawing of the world of mankind does not mean that their response is to be compulsory. Some have used this passage to try to prove that all will be forced to be eternally saved, but rightly understood it teaches quite the contrary. It does indicate that the Lord will exert helpful influences upon all men, but He will never violate their free moral agency, their right to exert their own wills as they please. This eternal principle is stated in John 4: 24, 23: “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. . . . for the Father seeketh such to worship him.”

In proof that the word “drawing” does not signify compulsion, let us note that the Father’s drawing during the Gospel Age has not been compulsory, but has consisted of enlightenment, help, and opportunities which may be either accepted or resisted by all who experience His drawing. We are told concerning the drawing at the present time that “Many are called, but few are chosen” (Matt. 22: 14). Few make their calling and election sure by obedience to the terms of their call, though this does not mean they are eternally lost. The Lord has made gracious provisions whereby none will ever be eternally lost except by completely wilful sin against full light.

Millennial-Age Drawing

During the coming Millennial Kingdom, the light, the encouragement, the general influence of that time will be so favorable that all shall come to a knowledge of the truth and to the fullest opportunities of reconciliation with God (Isa. 11: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 4). Only after continued unyielding resistance to all the helps at that time will it come to pass that the soul who will not obey that Prophet, Priest, and King, then in power, shall be destroyed from among the people (Ps. 145: 20; Prov. 10: 29, 30; Acts 3: 23).

* * *

Servants of God and Man

The third in a series of articles on godly men and women from around the world, whose lives have shaped the cultures in which we live.



William Booth Co-Founder of The Salvation Army

BORN IN 1829 to a poor family in Nottingham, England, William Booth was forced to leave school at the age of 13 years to earn a meagre living for himself, his mother, and three sisters, after his father's death. Apprenticed to a pawnbroker, the sight of hungry, desperate mothers pawning their wedding rings to feed their families became etched on his memory.

At the tender age of 15 years, William experienced a profound religious conversion and knew with sudden clarity that "God should have all there was of William Booth." Without delay he began open-air preaching in the tradition of his hero John Wesley, choosing the poorest districts of the city.

The move to London

As he grew from youth to manhood, the pressing needs of his family drew William to London to seek better employment, and this he found at a pawnshop in Walworth. Hating the work which made him more painfully aware than ever of the abject poverty of so many people, he found satisfaction in joining the local Methodist Church where he became a well-respected lay preacher.

William's release from the pawnbroking business came when a Methodist Reformer heard him preach and recognized his potential. He offered William 20 shillings a week as a travelling evangelist with the Methodist New Connexion, and the young man's destiny took shape. While serving at a church in Brixton, William met and fell in love with Catherine Mumford, a deeply consecrated young woman, his ideal partner, and they were married in 1855.

Changes in prospect

For two years William travelled with Catherine from coast to coast conducting energetic revival meetings, and there were said to be an average of 20 converts a day. But serving for a term in Brighouse, Yorkshire, and later in Gateshead, Tyneside, William became somewhat disheartened, feeling he should be doing more to reach the ordinary people. The New Connexion were no longer sympathetic to his energetic evangelistic activities, and he abhorred their attitude of social rigidity and exclusiveness. "Religion," he said, "means loving God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself." With Catherine's support, William broke with the Methodist New Connexion, but with a wife and four children to support, his prospects were dismal.

The Gospel is free for all!

The Booths carried no dogma, but along with their belief that the unconverted were destined for eternal punishment, they felt deep pity for the outcast, and hated the dirt, the squalor, and the suffering. Somehow William spared money from his meagre resources to hire secular buildings — even a circus tent — to which the lost and degraded could come. His chief concern was to stand up in the market place and shout out a message of hope and salvation to all lost creatures in need of comfort and hope.

This concern finally found its focus among the poverty-stricken folk of London's East End in the mid-1860s, when William and Catherine started a movement called "The Christian Mission." It grew quite slowly, being but one of several hundred charitable and religious groups trying to help the poor at that time. Then an unexpected touch of inspiration transformed the scene completely. A new name and a new approach caught the imagination and the enthusiasm of thousands.

The Salvation Army

*A banner, a uniform, a rank. Military-style brass bands, and a marching campaign to lift the spirits of the people and enlist soldiers of the cross! And a General to lead the battle!
Onward, Christian Soldiers!*

William Booth's fiery style of preaching fitted the military image — a little flamboyant and melodramatic — but it roused thousands to repentance and hope. After early opposition, the movement took hold nationally and internationally. Money was poured in to finance such projects as homes for the homeless and for released prisoners, legal aid for the poor, and practical help for alcoholics. The military tactics were reflected in "The War Cry" journal; seven bonneted lasses "*laid siege*" to New York; daughter Kate "*opened fire*" in France. And the world's concept of Christianity was transformed.

General William Booth concluded a speech at the Royal Albert Hall on 9th May, 1912, with these words:

*"While women weep as they do now, I'll fight; while little children go hungry as they do, I'll fight; while men go to prison, in and out, in and out, as they do, I'll fight; while there is a drunkard left, while there is a poor lost girl on the streets, while there remains one dark soul without the light of God, I'll fight — I'll fight to the very end."*¹

After his death three months later, 150,000 people filed past the old warrior's casket, and at his funeral Salvation Army officers knelt in love and respect, along with thieves, tramps, harlots, the lost, and the outcast.

The General had laid down his sword.

¹ "Booth the Beloved" by J. Evan Smith, Oxford University Press

Catherine Booth
(née Mumford)
Co-Founder of
The Salvation Army



CATHERINE'S BIRTHPLACE

was Ashbourne, Derbyshire. Born in January 1829, she was a grave and sensitive girl, given a strong Christian upbringing by her father, a Methodist lay preacher, and her deeply religious mother. By the time she was 12 years old, Catherine had read her Bible through eight times.

At 14 she became seriously ill and was confined to bed, but her mind was remarkably active, and being concerned about the dangers of alcohol she wrote articles for a Temperance magazine. At 16 she made her full commitment to the service of God.

Workers together

By 1844 the family had moved to London and Catherine became an active member of the Methodist Church in Brixton. There she met William Booth, and their firm friendship led to marriage in June 1855. Actively sharing in all his evangelistic work, enduring many hardships, and at the same time raising a large family, Catherine developed her own reputation as an outstanding speaker and campaigner especially for the rights of women and children. She and William parted company with the Methodists who were uncomfortable with such religious zeal, and eventually founded The Christian Mission in the East End of London, devoted to preaching the Gospel and working for social reform which they saw as their commitment to serve God and man.

Soup and salvation

Catherine organized "Food-for-the-Million" shops where the poor could buy a cheap meal, and at Christmas food was distributed to hundreds of needy families. One of her campaigns was against the abuse of women and children as "sweated labor." She discovered red-eyed women stitching 11 hours a day in poorly lit tenements for a wage of nine

pence, while a man doing similar work in a factory earned five times as much. She learned that in the match-making industry the use of dangerous substances caused many early deaths among the workers, mainly women. Catherine and others tried to shame employers into paying higher wages and providing better working conditions for these women.

A persuasive speaker to the outcasts of society, she was well able also to gain the ear and the financial support of the wealthy for the Mission's charitable work. In 1885 she took part in a campaign which resulted in the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Act which protected young girls by raising the age of consent to 16 years.

The best men?

When in 1878 the movement adopted the new title, "The Salvation Army," women officers enjoyed equal rights with men. This caused much hostility at first, as woman's place was generally regarded as being in the home. But Catherine's example was outstanding. In spite of poor health and a workload that would have broken many a man, she raised eight children, all of whom became active in the work of The Salvation Army.

Catherine Booth was influential in the setting up of the movement, contributing to the formulation of its basic principles of conduct and its position as to matters of belief. On the lighter side, she also designed a flag, and bonnets for the ladies, which for many years unmistakably identified as "Salvationists" those courageous women and girls whose commitment often took them into danger among the wilder elements of society.

Catherine died of cancer in October 1890, at 61 years of age. A small commemorative plaque sits above the door of the humble house where she was born. But perhaps the best tribute was from her husband. Though opposed in his earlier years to the idea of women taking an active role in the Gospel ministry, he admitted in later life that "the best men in my Army are the women," and for him, Catherine was undoubtedly the best of all.

On a topical note, the Salvation Army in the U.S. announced on January 20, 2004, that it will receive a gift from the estate of Joan B. Kroc, wife of Ray Kroc, the founder of McDonald's Corporation. The trustees of the estate have estimated that the gift could be in excess of \$1.5 billion. The exact amount will not be known until the completion of the administration of the estate. The gift by Mrs. Kroc has been specifically designated for the development of community centers only within the U.S.

THE UNIFORM: It took about two years to standardize the uniform. By 1880 a uniform in navy blue serge was introduced for men and women. Men wore a red jersey under a high neck tunic with a stiff collar and a military style cap, with "The Salvation Army" embroidered on a red band. Women wore a long navy skirt, a close fitting high-necked tunic with a white lace collar and a black straw bonnet with red band, tied with a ribbon bow.

Wearing of the uniform has always been optional. Salvationists had to buy their own uniform, which cost in 1890 about three weeks' wages. Today, the cost is about an average weekly wage. Many chose to wear the uniform out of pride for

the principles it stood for — not only to services but on any occasion where formal dress was worn, such as weddings, funerals, or family portraits.

Today the old style uniform is being replaced by a more modern, less formal style, adaptable to considerations of climate or culture. Many still wear it to show their support for the principles for which it stands:

- A commitment in the war against evil.
- A personal testimony to the wearer's own Christian faith and practice.
- The availability of the Salvationist to anyone needing a helping hand and listening ear.

Other sources consulted: Chambers Biographical Dictionary; Encyclopedia Britannica; www1.salvationarmy.org/heritage.nsf/home; www.bbc.co.uk/nottingham/features/2002/10/william_booth_great_briton.shtml; www.times1190.freereserve.co.uk/general.htm

IN THE DOMAIN OF RELIGION there has always been a tendency to wrap everything in mystery, the result being that in the proper and commendable exercise of faith, otherwise intelligent people appear to abandon the use of reason, thereby reducing their faith to mere credulity. The Creator does not require us to accept without question propositions that do not appeal to the God-given faculty of *reason*. Of all God's earthly creatures, only of mankind was it said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1: 26). And the bestowal on man and woman of such a marvellous, *godlike* faculty as reasoning power has made possible responsive communication between ourselves and our Creator, on a conscious, reflective level.

reason
"Come now, and let us reason
together, saith the Lord"
— Isaiah 1: 18 —

Have you ever talked with God?

Surely! All who believe in God and have come into some measure of relationship with Him have felt the need to talk things over with Him as a revered Friend. *Such a privilege!* And in venturing to talk with a God of such greatness, such majesty, such inconceivable glory as the Creator of all things, we are awestruck, amazed, that He should extend the hand of friendship, and desire to enter into conversation with us.

Why does He extend to us this hand of friendship?

In common with all humanity, we are fallen from grace, no longer deserving the privileges of sonship, alienated by the disobedience of our first parents from that warm intimacy that existed in the beginning when the Lord walked and talked with Adam and Eve in the garden during the cool of the evening (Gen. 3: 8).

And yet — and yet, He is willing — even urgent upon us, to repair the breach: "Come now, and let us reason together." Can it be, then, that He is ready to overlook our inherited and acquired faults and failings, and to welcome us back into fellowship with Himself? Has our Heavenly Father grieved over us and, like the father of the prodigal son in Jesus' parable, had compassion on us in our weakness, rejoicing at last to see us afar off, looking in His direction?

It must be so. But — *let us reason* — since God justly condemned Adam and his posterity, surely he could not reverse His sentence? Could divine *love* make void His attribute of justice? No! Scripture and reason confirm our instinct, that God would never violate His own justice. As the Psalmist has said: "Justice and judgment are the habitation (*foundation* – *RV*) of thy throne" (Psa. 89: 14). And Habakkuk declares: "O Lord my God . . . Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" (1: 13) — the Just One cannot approve evil or countenance sin.

How, then, can we come to Him?

We can come because He tells us that "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." But how is

this achieved, since we are said to be born in sin and shapen in iniquity? The answer is no mystery. It is logical and reasonable. God in His great love provided a way to release the world from the consequences of sin. It was by the offense of one — Adam — that all were alienated from God and condemned to death. It is by the substitutionary sacrifice of another — Jesus — that Adam and his descendants are to be freed. The scarlet stain of sin is blotted out for those who apply to themselves the cleansing blood of the perfect man Jesus, Who alone could satisfy divine justice. When God looks at us now, He no longer sees our stains of sin, but sees our covering of Christ's righteousness, as it were, a symbolic white robe which hides our blemishes. And He says: "Come, let us reason together!"

We are ransomed

It is not the *suffering* of the Savior that saves us, though suffering is part of the dying process. It is His *death* in our place that releases us from the sentence. He paid the required price to Divine Justice, to free Adam and *all in him*, who otherwise die without exception. Reason here reveals to us God's economy, in that as *one* Savior is sufficient, so in due time all in Christ shall be made alive (1 Tim. 2: 6; 1 Cor. 15: 22). The reasoning mind also understands that the life Jesus gave must be forever sacrificed. He cannot claim back the price He paid. At His resurrection, therefore, our Lord was not restored to human life, but raised to the Divine nature and, as He said, "The world seeth me no more" (John 14: 19). Logical? Yes! Reasonable? Yes!

God respects us if we respect Him

True friendship is a meeting of minds and hearts, built on respect, affection, and loyalty. A good earthly father delights in the trust and ready approach of his children to talk things over, and many a dad is the family problem solver — at least until the young ones fancy they have outgrown that need!

So our Heavenly Father *invites us* to tell Him of our daily concerns, our successes and failures, our hopes and fears. If we have a problem, with Bible doctrine perhaps, or arising out of the issues of the Christian life, our natural resort is to consult our Father. Our approach of course is humble, in recognition of so great an honor, but to decline His invitation because we feel unworthy — or perhaps wish to hide from Him some waywardness of character we are reluctant to check — would be to abuse His great love and to spurn the fatherly hand of friendship. Saddest of all would be to absent ourselves altogether from keeping company with Him, thinking we have outgrown the need for regular discussion. God grant that our heart's desire and our reason will lead us to say ever:

*Lord, I delight in thee, and on thy care depend;
To thee in every trouble flee, my best, my truest Friend.*

THE MAIL BOX



Dear Brother Hedman,

I thank you and your co-laborers for your good work for mankind. Indeed, you are a good witness for this generation.

Increasing *The Bible Standard* from 12 to 16 pages is a welcome idea for it gives the privilege to know about Christ and the Bible that much more through your magazine.

The first in the series of godly men and women is so rich and full of facts, that we are looking for more in the series, please. Thanks again.

Humbly,

Correspondent from W. Africa.

Dear Friend,

I want to thank you for sending me some pamphlets to read. I'm trying to live my life for the Lord now. I needed a change in my life for the better, and with the good Lord Jesus Christ in my heart I will be a better person for Him. We all make mistakes and we ask forgiveness. God is love. I hope to hear from you soon.

Thank you very much. I will be praying for you. God bless you.

A.S.,

Kentucky

We welcome your letters for publication but reserve the right to edit them. We indicate only the correspondent's initials, except where the writer is an appointee of the Movement. Submit letters, marked "Editorial" to our mailing address, or e-mail us at: editorial@biblestandard.com (enter "Letters Column" in the subject line). Please give your full name and postal address.

PUBLICATIONS

A partial list of our publications appears below. Send for our free catalogue.

Prices are for U.S. addresses only; others add 25 percent toward postage.

STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES

Vol. 1, <i>The Divine Plan of the Ages</i>	paperbound \$1.50, cloth \$ 3.00
Vol. 2, <i>The Time Is At Hand</i> (chronology, antichrist, etc.)	\$ 4.00
Vol. 3, <i>Thy Kingdom Come</i> (prophecies, Israel, etc.)	\$ 2.00
Vol. 4, <i>The Battle of Armageddon</i> (the great conflict)	\$ 2.00
Vol. 5, <i>The At-One-Ment Between God and Man</i> (clearly explained) ..	\$ 2.00
Vol. 6, <i>The New Creation</i> (its duties, baptism, sabbath, etc.)	\$ 2.50
Complete set of these clothbound "Bible keys"	\$10.95

ATTRACTIVE HARDBOUND BOOKS

<i>Life — Death — Hereafter</i> (224 pages)	paperbound \$1.50, cloth \$ 2.00
<i>God</i> (547 pages; describing Jehovah's great attributes, etc.)	\$ 2.00
<i>Creation</i> (585 pages; describing God's creative work, etc.)	\$ 2.00
<i>The Bible</i> (794 pages; much useful information on it, its uses)	\$ 2.50
<i>Christ — Spirit — Covenants</i> (744 pages, very informative)	\$ 2.50
<i>The Chart of God's Plan</i> (360 pages)	\$ 5.00
<i>The Millennium</i> (480 pages; expounding many Scriptures)	\$ 7.00
<i>Daily Heavenly Manna and Devotional Service</i>	\$ 6.00
<i>Poems of Dawn</i> (300 choice Christian poems for many occasions)	\$ 5.00
<i>Photo-Drama of Creation</i> (good for children; paperbound)	\$ 4.95
<i>Hymns of Millennial Dawn</i> (words only, 50 cents)	hardbound \$ 6.00
<i>Tabernacle Shadows</i> (176 pages, types explained)	hardbound \$ 4.00

HELPFUL PRICED BOOKLETS

<i>Focus on Zionism</i> (a Christian Zionist view)	\$ 1.00
<i>The Restoration of Israel</i> (48 pages; from "Studies" Vol. 3)	\$ 1.00
<i>Anglo-Israelism — A Modern Delusion</i> (80 pages; this and other serious errors of H. W. and Garner Ted Armstrong refuted)	50
<i>The Gift of Tongues — Should We Seek or Shun It?</i> (80 pages)	50
<i>Is there Hope for Any of the Unsaved Dead?</i> (80 hope-inspiring pages)	50
<i>Satan, Satanism, Demonism and Exorcism</i> (80 pages; real dangers)	50
<i>Born Again</i> (48 pages; what, when and how)	50
<i>The Great Pyramid and the Bible</i> (48 pages; Bible corroborations)	50
<i>The Hell of the Bible</i> (60 pages; a veritable sunburst to many thousands; treats every Bible text relating to Hell)	25
<i>Spiritism — Ancient & Modern</i> (67 pages; a Biblical, factual, and reasonable explanation, proving it to be Demonism)	25

<i>Jewish Hopes and Prospects</i> (52 pages; describes present-day fulfillments of God's promises to the Jews; illustrated)	10
<i>The Revised Standard Version Examined</i>	10
<i>The Teachings of "Jehovah's Witnesses" Examined</i> (points <i>pro</i> and <i>con</i>)	10

FREE TRACTS — DISTRIBUTORS WANTED

Generally we do not pay distributors of our literature. Samples of many of our items will be provided on request. Preferably, our literature should first be studied and digested prior to distribution, so that you would be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you, with gentleness and reverence (1 Pet. 3: 15).

FREE 24-PAGE BOOKLETS FOR SPECIAL LIMITED NEEDS

Where are the Dead? • Life and Immortality • What is the Soul? • The Resurrection of the Dead • Spiritism is Demonism • Why Does A Loving God Permit Calamities? • The Sabbath Day • Faith Healing • Baptism • Speaking in Tongues — Is it of God? • The Kingdom of God • Mormonism — A Modern Delusion • Preservation of Identity in the Resurrection • The Evolution Theory Examined • Why We Believe in God's Existence • The Rapture • Future Life By Resurrection — Not Reincarnation • Must Christians Pay Tithes?

FREE LEAFLETS FOR GENERAL DISTRIBUTION

Do You Know? • Thieves In Paradise • Israel's Return • New Earth • What is Hell? • The Bible vs. Evolution • "Flying Saucers" • Jesus' Second Advent • Judgment Day • God Loves You! • Earth's Coming Theocratic Government • War on Poverty • Oath-bound Promise • Man's Eternal Destiny • Pollution Crisis • What is the Truth? • Great Pyramid • Restitution • Is God or Satan Winning? • The Full Gospel • Peace — How it Will Come • True Freedom

SMALL LEAFLETS FOR GENERAL DISTRIBUTION

Titles vary from time to time; items in stock may change.

Bible Standard Ad • Coming By and By • Christ's Glorious Reign • Close Your Eyes/DP Ad • Desolation/Restoration • Father Take My Hand • A Good New Year Recipe • How Readest Thou? • Nearing God's Kingdom • My Lord and I/ Picture • 23rd Psalm • Salvation/All Things New • Scripture Studies Ad • Watchman, What of the Night?

announcements

MEMORIAL DATE FOR 2004

Our Lord's Memorial is Friday, April 2, after 6:00 p.m.

GENERAL CONVENTIONS FOR 2004

At-a-glance

France: (All at Barlin) April 11, 12; July 30-August 1; October 30, 31

Germany: *Velbert*, May 29-31; *Altleiningen*, October 1-3

Nigeria: *Umunkiri*, June 25-27; *Osusu Amukwa*, September 26; *Aba, Abia State*, November 26-28

Poland: *Poznan*, May 1-3; *Susiec*, July 9-11; *Rzeszow*, July 12-14; *Wroklow*, July 16-18; *Bydgoszcz*, July 19-21; *Katowice*, August 27-29

United Kingdom: *Hyde*, August 6-8; *Sheffield*, October 30, 31

United States: *Florida*, March 12-14; *Massachusetts*, April 16-18; *Michigan*, May 29-31; *Philadelphia Area*, July 3-5; *Ohio*, August 13-15; *Illinois*, October 1-3; *Oklahoma*, November 12-14.

Details

United States

Florida, March 12-14 (Friday-Sunday)

Site: Oceanfront Comfort Inn, 1515 N. First St., Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250; Telephone: (800) 654-8776. *Rates and Reservations:* \$69.00 for 1-4 guests, plus 13% tax. Reservations must be made directly with the hotel, by **February 15:** *be sure to inform them that you are attending the Laymen's Home Missionary Movement Convention to secure the special rate.* Please make all other inquiries to Mrs. Beverly Blaine (Class Secretary), 3569 John Anderson Drive, Ormond Beach, FL 32176; telephone (386) 441-9836.

Massachusetts, April 16-18 (Friday-Sunday)

Site: Holiday Inn, 245 Whiting Farms Road, Holyoke, MA 01040; telephone: (413) 534-3311 *Rates and Reservations:* \$82.28 (includes tax), for 1-2 people. Reservations must be made directly with the hotel by **March 15:** *mention you are attending the Laymen's Home Missionary Movement Convention to secure the special rate.* Noon meals will be provided: \$13.95 donation. Please inform us how many are expected to attend noon meals by March 31st; and if transportation from the airport is required. Contact Mr. and Mrs. G. Vanags, 982 E. St. North, Suffield, CT 06078.

SERVICES BY VISITING MINISTERS

Ralph Herzig

Boston, Massachusetts, March 28

Richard Blaine

Florida Convention, March 12-14

John Treble

Florida Convention, March 12-14

Robert Herzig

Springfield, Massachusetts, April 4

John Wojnar

New Haven, Connecticut, May 16

Leon Snyder

March: Cincinnati, Ohio, 7; Iuka, Mississippi, 8; Booneville, Mississippi, 9; Florida Convention, 12-14; Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 17, 18; Sebring, Florida, 19; Keystone Heights, Florida, 28; Waycross, Georgia, 30, 31. *April:* Marietta, Georgia, 2-4; Reidsville, North Carolina, 6, 7; Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, 8; Wilmington, North Carolina, 9; Manteo, North Carolina, 10; Norfolk, Virginia, 11; Lenox, Massachusetts, 14; Springfield, Massachusetts, 21; Wrentham, Massachusetts, 23; West Haven, Connecticut, 25; Chester Springs, Pennsylvania, 26, 27; Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, 28; North Canton, Ohio, 29; Sand Ridge, West Virginia, 30; Nelsonville, Ohio, May 1, 2

Baron Duncan

Pittsfield, Massachusetts, April 11

Tom Cimbura

Florida Convention, March 12-14; Chicago, Illinois, April 24, 25

Don Lewis

Florida Convention, March 12-14; Jamaica Convention, April 9-12; Barbados, April 14, 15; Trinidad, April 16-18; Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, April 20, 21; Keystone Heights, Florida, April 23

Jim Shaw

Independence, Kansas, March 28

Jack Zilch

Florida Convention, March 12-14

Evangelists' Services

Robert Branconnier, New York City, March 21; Keystone Heights, Florida, May 9; Boston, Massachusetts, May 23

Harry Hammer, Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 1, 2

Jon Hanning, Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, March 6, 7; Marietta, Georgia, March 19; North Canton, Ohio, April 2; Derry, Pennsylvania, April 3, 4; Cincinnati, Ohio, May 8, 9

Richard Piquene, Mustang, Oklahoma, March 7; Mustang, Oklahoma, May 2

Harold Solomon, New Haven, Connecticut, March 21

Robert Steenrod, Beechgrove, Tennessee, April 4

William Sturges, Athens/Nelsonville, Ohio, March 28

Edward Tomkiewicz, Grand Rapids, Michigan, March 27; Muskegon, Michigan, March 28

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