

The Bible Standard

“Send out your light and truth! Let them lead me;...”

Psalms 43:3

“LIFT UP A STANDARD FOR THE PEOPLE”

Isaiah 62:10

INSIDE

Wait On The Lord	2
Preparations For Christ's Reign	5
Baptism	7
Anchored In The Present Truth	10
God's Glory In The Heavens	13
Bible Questions	14
Announcements	15

Wait On The Lord

*“They that wait upon the Lord shall. . . not faint.”
Isa. 40: 31*

THE EXPRESSION, “Wait on the LORD,” does not mean a rendering of service to the LORD, but rather to wait for the LORD, to see what His will is for us. We do not understand that it has the thought of ministering to the LORD, as a servant would wait on his master, but of patient watching until we learn what our LORD would have us do. Every Christian should wait to be guided by Him, and not run on before Him, unmindful of what is the LORD’S purpose for him. “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths” is the counsel of the Wise Man (Proverbs 3: 5, 6). Many of God’s people have made mistakes along this line.

Having committed our ways to the LORD, we should go forward only as He leads us. If we are not clear as to His will, let us not be in too great a hurry, nor try to guide ourselves, but present the matter to Him in earnest prayer, asking that we may have no will or way of our own, but will be guided only as He wills. Then, let us wait and watch for the indication of His providence, and follow as He seems to lead, leaving the results with Him. We are not to follow our own choice without evidences that it is God’s will. The question may sometimes be asked, are you going to do it this way or that way? Are you going to this place or to that place? Our attitude and our reply, if we have not as yet clearly ascertained the LORD’S will in the matter, should be, I am not yet fully decided. I will consider the Word of the LORD, to see how His instructions seem to apply in this case. Or, I am watching to see what the LORD’S providence seems to indicate and I am praying over the matter, that I may be guided in the right way. The poet expressed the correct thought:

“I am afraid to touch
Things that involve so much.”

Those who wait on the LORD do not always seem to prosper best, from outward appearances. But the Psalmist declares that we should be of good courage as we thus wait on God. We are pursuing the right course, and shall have His blessing. We make no mistake when we wait upon Him. Others may seem to be getting ahead, at first, but we are to “wait on the LORD.”

Take no step unless you feel sure that God is directing and guiding. Watch for the meaning of His providence. Study His Word. Let not your faith depart from its foundation. “Be of good courage!” Good courage is courage of a good amount, not merely a little courage. Be of strong courage; “and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the LORD.” This is to be understood to mean the soul, the being—especially the intelligent person. Jehovah will support us, He will fortify us and make us strong to bear, strong to do His will as it is made known to us. They that wait on Him shall not want for any good thing.

TRAITS NECESSARY TO SUCCESS

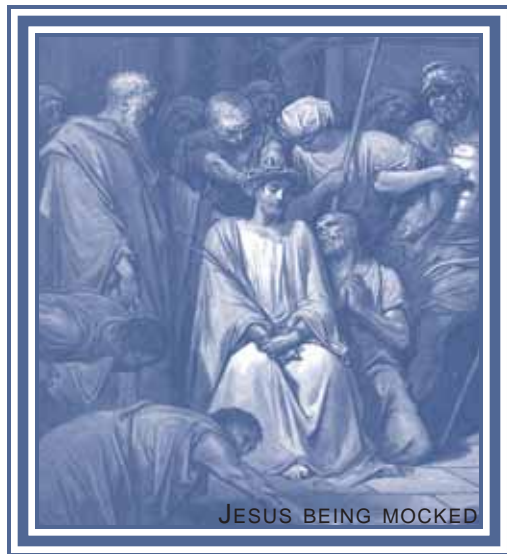
Courage, fortitude and persistency in the service of the Heavenly Father are necessary for His people. Such traits are needful even to the world. Whoever lacks these qualities of character is sure to make poor success in life. Lack of courage, lack of hope, is one of the chief causes of failure in the world. Our text, however, calls attention, not to the world, but to those who belong to God. The precious promises of God’s Word, which are only for His people, those who are wholly His, give these every reason for hope; they have full authority to be strong and of a good courage. The people of God will have trials and experiences similar to those of the world, in addition to experiences and trials peculiar to them as followers of Christ. However, these come not

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to us in a haphazard way as to the world, but are under the direct supervision of the Lord.

Those of us who are new in the service of the Master might think for a time that matters should run smoothly and that we should not have the difficulties common to the world; and now that God sees us as His people, He would protect us from afflictions and



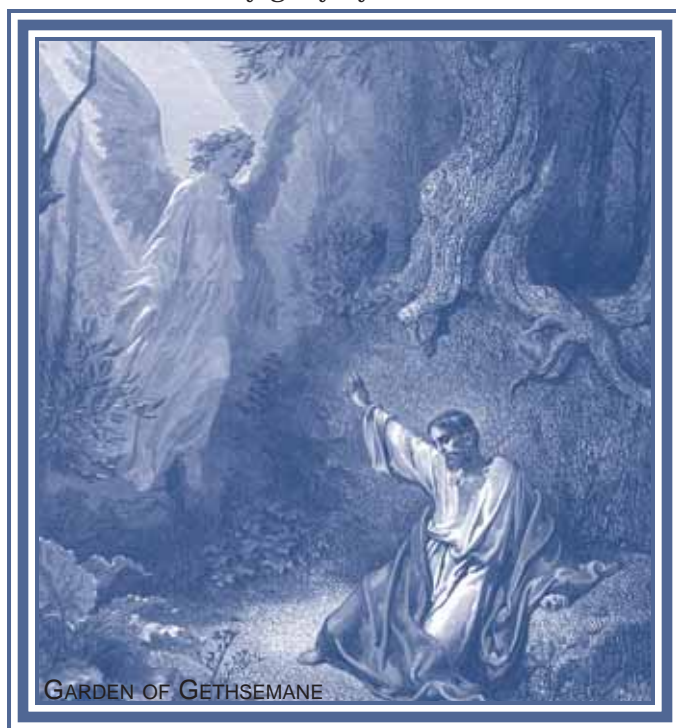
mistreatment. But the deeper we study into the Word, it becomes apparent that this is not true; we come to see that we are to walk by faith, and not by sight. We learn that we are not to expect to have outward manifestations of His favor for all to see, but that it is our part to suffer as Christians similar to the experiences that Christ had (1 Peter 2: 20, 21; Acts 14: 22). It is then that we learn to be obedient, and find out what it means to be obedient.

The Master learned obedience—learned what obedience meant—“by the things which He suffered.” The Christian way has never been an easy path. We, as His followers, learn that the Lord is now calling a class that has faith in Him, a class who accepts His Word fully. In time they come to see that, “If God be for them, who can be against them?” If matters do not go as they had expected, if trials come, they will say, “We know that all things work for good to them that love God.” Therefore, as we make progress in the School of Christ and are guided by the Word of the Lord, the instruction is for us to be of good courage and to pursue onward in the Christian way. There are many difficulties for the future, and it requires bravery to surmount these obstacles. The courage, born of faith in God and in His “exceeding great and precious promises,” fortifies us when otherwise our bravery might be overwhelmed. It provides strength to which the world are strangers.

TRUST WHERE WE CANNOT TRACE

When, as the followers of Jesus, we become discouraged and lose the Lord’s hope and strength, it is because the Lord’s promises have become distant and inaccessible to us. To lose courage is to lose faith. Loss of faith and courage makes a child of God powerless before his foes. We must trust our Father, even when the meaning of His providence’s are veiled from our eyes, and when our efforts to serve Him seem to be blocked. We look back at the Apostles and their experiences. The Apostle Paul was very desirous of carrying the Message of the Gospel to others. On several occasions, he tried to go into Asia, but he was prevented from going. He began to wonder why this was, why his efforts continued to prove failures. But the Lord revealed to him that he was to go into Greece instead. In his first Epistle to the Church at Thessalonica, he writes, “Wherefore we would have come to you, even I, Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us” (1 Thessalonians 2: 18). But we are sure that the Lord will overrule the machinations of Satan and cause them to work out His own glory, and the lesson of patience and submission will be a blessing to His children.

We see that in the Garden of Gethsemane our Lord had not lost faith in God, but was fearful for a time. As He came to the closing hours of His experiences on earth, He wondered whether or not He had faithfully conformed to all the Father’s requirements. He knew that the slightest infraction of God’s Law would mean His death—eternally. Had He completed His sacrifice acceptably? Would He be ushered from death into Heavenly glory by a resurrection? Then He



received from the Father the assurance that He had been altogether faithful. All the trials and difficulties, which the Master underwent in the laying down of His life, preceded Him as a sweet incense, a precious perfume, beyond the veil, into the Most Holy as shown in the type (Leviticus 16: 12, 13).

A PROPER FEAR

After the Jewish high priest had crumbled the sweet incense upon the fire of the golden altar, after its fragrance had penetrated beyond the *second veil* and had covered the *Ark of the Covenant* and the *Mercy Seat*, he then himself passed beneath the veil. Every time the high priest raised the veil thus to pass under it he probably feared; for if he had failed in any particular to carry out his sacrificial work acceptably, he would have died as he passed under the veil. So our Lord Jesus knew that His work must be acceptable in the most absolute sense, else He would forever forfeit His existence. He would become as though He had not been; He would lose all.

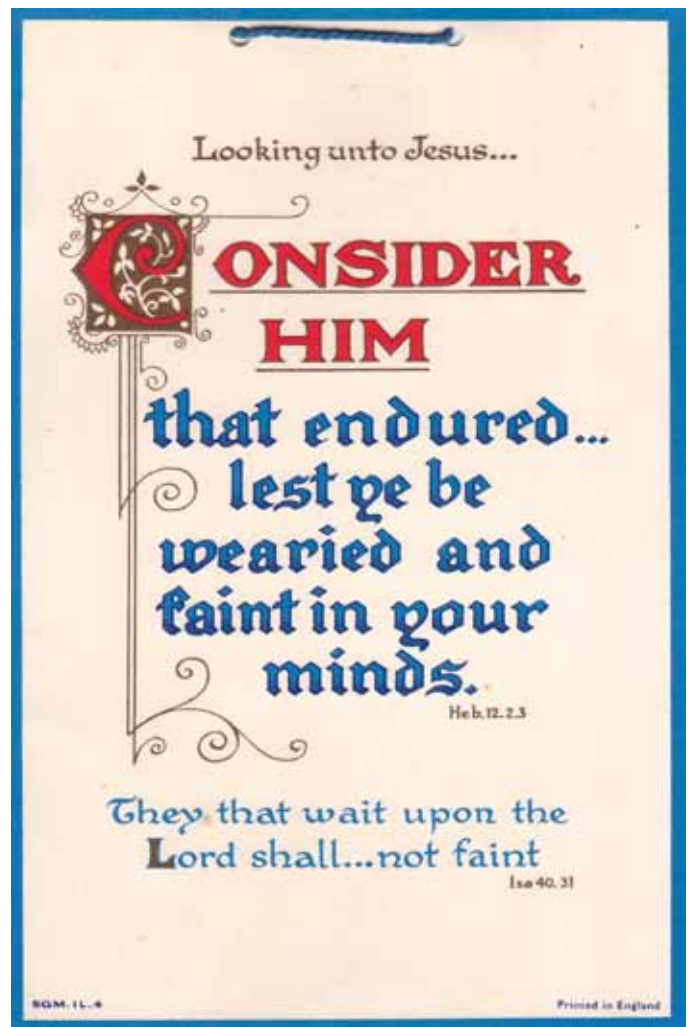
There was no earthly being to give our Lord encouragement along this line. [There was no one to say, "You have done everything perfectly; You could not have done better."] Therefore, the Master went alone to the Father for this assurance and for strength and courage. He prayed, "Let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." And the Father heard His prayer and gave Him the needed assurance and strength. He was heard in respect to that which He feared; and during all that night and the following day, up to the hour of His crucifixion, He was calm and courageous.

Therefore, the Lord's people should have a proper apprehension. Controlled anxiety is good for us; but it should not proceed to the point of hindering our efforts and dissipating our courage. We should have the fear enjoined by St. Paul when he said, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it" (Hebrews 4: 1). The fear referred to here is the deep concern that one should have if he were to displease the Lord. This proper fear the Master had. He never became discouraged, never held back from the work, which the Father had given Him to do. His fear was one of reverence, which engendered a watchfulness and care, circumspection of conduct and of life, that He might be wholly pleasing to the Father. This all Christians should have. We should watch lest we neglect some privilege or duty.

This regulated concern will lead us to careful inspection of ourselves. We should ask ourselves, "What do I believe? Why do I believe it?" We should go over the ground again. We should repeat over in our minds

the proofs of the correctness of our stand for the Truth. By so doing, the Lord will strengthen us in the Faith, He will strengthen our heart. If our hope is based on our own strength, it will be in a very precarious position in its chance for survival. With such a self-centered sight before us, we will come to the point of discouragement, and we may become more timid, may lose all self-assurance, may realize complete helplessness and weakness and our need of leaning wholly upon the Lord, of looking constantly to Him for guidance and support. It is hoped that by going through such an experience, we may learn to wait upon Him, and that this promise will be for us: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint"—Isaiah 40: 31.

* * *



GUIDE ME

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
Hold me with thy powerful hand.
Hymns of the Millennial Dawn — page 71

PREPARATIONS FOR CHRIST'S REIGN



“The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets, and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great; and should destroy those who destroy the earth”
Revelation 11:18.

THE LORD'S PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS EXPECTED the fulfillment of prophecy long before the LORD'S due time for bringing it to pass. Many of the faithful were expecting more than they should have looked for to occur with the starting of the Time of Trouble in 1914. The human mind seems to have a natural tendency, and one with which we should have sympathy, to expect matters to culminate more rapidly, fulfillments to come more suddenly, than they ever do come. For instance, the Scriptures tell us that about the time of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, certain great events, enumerated in our text, will begin to take place. Many Christian people, looking at the statement, expect all this to be fulfilled in a few minutes, or a few hours, or at most a few weeks. As we come to understand the Scripture, we perceive that it covers the thousand years of Christ's Reign (Rev. 20: 6).

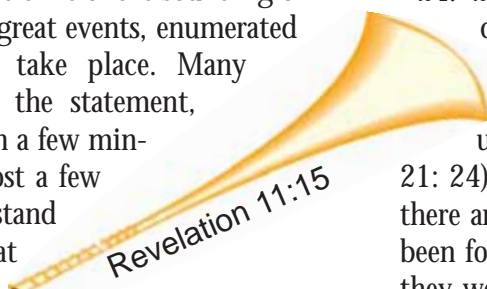
Now let us consider the text at the beginning of our article; “The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged. . .” The Church received their judgment and trial for life first, in this Gospel Age; the world, on the other hand, will receive their evaluation in the thousand-year Day that God has appointed (Acts 17: 31; 2 Pet. 3: 8). To continue with the text of Rev. 11: 18, “and that You should reward Your servants the prophets [the Ancient Worthies] and the Saints [the Church, the Little Flock] and those that reverence Your name, [these are the Restitutionists, the world of mankind, who will be judged and who will have the Divine decision passed upon them Millennially], both small and great [small—the Youthful Worthies—*youthfuls* (Joel 2: 28); great—the Great Multitude (Rev. 7: 9-17)] and for destroying those who destroy (corrupt) the earth.” [These make up

the Second Death class (Rev. 2: 11)]. This verse contains so much that certainly a thousand years will be required for its accomplishment.

Another related text is Daniel 12:1 that describes the period of transition from Gentile supremacy to Messiah's Kingdom. It reads, “There shall be a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation.” Our Lord discussed this statement in His great prophecy, and added, “No, nor ever shall be” (Matthew 24: 21). After speaking about the tribulation that came upon the Jews in the close of their Age, the

Master said, “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles (made subservient to) until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21: 24). We believe it reasonable for us to hold that if there are Gentile Times to be fulfilled, they must have been foretold; and that if they have been foretold, then they were foreordained, or planned of God, who knew beforehand how long those Gentile Times would be and when they would be completed (Amos 3: 7).

Our Lord's words, then, seemed to suggest to us the propriety of searching to see what we might discover concerning the Times, or years, of the Gentiles. Looking through our Bibles and our histories, we found that there was a particular date when God took away the Kingdom from His typical people, Israel; and that at that time He gave over the dominion of the world with more or less of a lease of power to the Gentile nations. We also found that the date when the Kingdom was removed from King Zedekiah, the last king of David's line, was in the year 607 B.C., *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES* (Volume 2, p. 380). Then we reasoned that if 607 B.C. was the time when God took away the typical kingdom, no doubt He had at that time the purpose of giving the lease of power to the Gentile nations; and we looked to see what secular history and the Bible had to say upon the subject.



THE IMAGE OF GENTILE SUPREMACY

To go over what we have learned in the books titled *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES* (Volume 2, p. 73), we see that when God took away the kingdom from King Zedekiah, He gave the dominion to the Gentiles, the Emperor Nebuchadnezzar being the first of these world-rulers. We learned, from the Word, that God gave Nebuchadnezzar a dream. By morning, the king had forgotten the dream but the Prophet Daniel then explained it to him. In his dream Nebuchadnezzar saw a great metallic image; the head of which was made of gold, the breast and the arms of silver, the belly and the thighs of brass, the legs of iron, and the feet of iron mixed with miry clay (Dan. 2: 32, 33).

The Prophet Daniel explained that this great image, which stood before Nebuchadnezzar, represented the four, successive, universal Gentile kingdoms. Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, was represented by the head of gold; next came the Medo-Persian Empire, which was illustrated by the breast and the arms of silver. Then followed Greece, shown by the belly and thighs of brass; after this was Rome, symbolized by the legs of iron and along came the so-called Holy Roman Empire, represented by the feet covered with miry clay; and last, the present governments of Europe, stand for the ten toes, also of iron smeared with miry clay (Dan. 2: 36-45).

According to this vision given to King Nebuchadnezzar and interpreted by the Prophet Daniel, God designed that metallic image to represent all the Gentile governments that would ever have sway over all the earth.

Clearly understanding this matter, then we can assert that, the period of time during which these universal empires will have controlled the world must be the Times of the Gentiles. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, God has mentioned the Gentile Times (Luke 21: 24), and now in the Old Testament we find out how many Times or years are indicated. For in Scriptural usage a Time means a year.

As we study the subject still further, we find that God had told the Israelites that they would come under His disfavor for Seven Times (Leviticus 26: 14-28).

These could not be seven literal years, for the Israelites passed through many tribulations as long as, or longer than seven years. One may ask what kind of "years" were these Times to be? We understand that they apparently were not literal years. They therefore must be symbolical. Since a literal year, Jewish reckoning, contains 360 days, and since in Bible prophecy a *day* represents a year of actual time (Ezek. 4: 6), each symbolic "Time" would be 360 years. So then, this period of Seven Times must mean 7 x 360 years, or 2520 years.

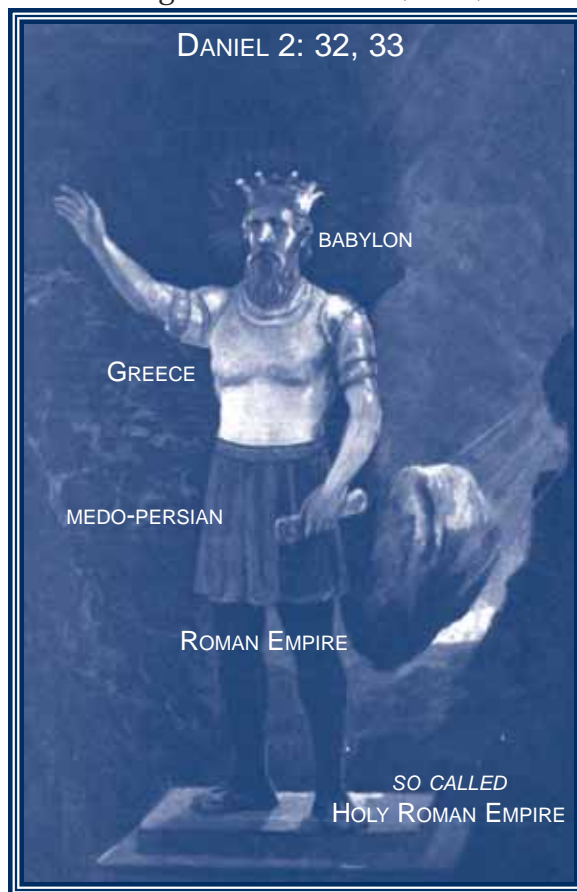
Accordingly, we found that this was to be the period of time during which Israel was to be overturned (Ezekiel 21: 25-27)—to have their kingdom and their government subject to the Gentile nations. Meantime, while setting aside His own typical kingdom, God, in effect, said to the Gentiles, I will not

be ready to set up My Kingdom for some time. In the interim, you may have the opportunity to demonstrate what you can do for the world. Institute the best governments that you can. Do the very best to rule the world justly and wisely.

EARTH'S GREAT UNIVERSAL EMPIRES

Full of confidence that they would rule the world in the best possible way, the Babylonians attempted to do so, but soon reached a sad climax. There followed a general program by which the rights of the people were disregarded, the wealthy getting everything and the poor practically nothing. Next came into power the Medes and Persians, who also started out very well, with just design and

every endeavor to do right. We recall that Cyrus, the first Medo-Persian Emperor, set free the Jews and gave them permission to return to Jerusalem; and that he sent back the holy vessels of the Temple, which were very valuable, but which he would not retain because they belonged to God and His chosen people. Cyrus attempted to maintain a just and righteous government; and yet before long, the Medo-Persian Empire failed to bring satisfaction to the people or to prove to be a great blessing to the world.



Then, in turn, followed the empire of Greece under its ruler Alexander the Great, who before he was twenty-one years of age, had conquered the then known world. For quite awhile, Greece ruled the world. Grecian civilization and various systems of Grecian philosophy went out worldwide. Greek theories on all kinds of subjects have more or less permeated all the great countries of earth. The influence, which went out from Greece, is felt in nearly every form of religion the world over, the religion of Christendom being itself a mixture of Grecian mythology and Christianity along with the teachings of the Mosaic Law and the Jewish Prophets. Greece had her day, and had to bid farewell to the scepter of power.

Next in line followed the Roman Empire with its various forms of government, each of which endeavored to rule the world wisely and justly. The result of all this was the centralization of power to a greater or lesser degree, the wealth accumulated

into the hands of a few, and the masses of the people were neither blessed nor satisfied. Then the Roman system began to fall.

By and by came in that mixture of Christianity and Roman civil power which was represented in the iron feet of the image, smeared with miry clay; the gloss of Christianity covering the civil power as the clay covered the feet of the image. This gloss did not make the nations really Christian, but has merely caused these kingdoms and governments to look upon themselves as though they were Christian; and this is what they called themselves—Christian Germany, Christian Great Britain, Christian France, Christian Russia, Christian Italy, and Christian Austria-Hungary, etc. (Continued—next issue).

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CHURCH HISTORY shows that the damnation theories grew gradually from the early days of the purity of the Truth of Jesus and the Apostles to the acceptance by the church of the eternal torment doctrine. The first theory advanced was that every descendent of Adam was born damned to eternal torture at the hands of Satan and his rebellious angels, and that the only escape offered was through baptism. But it was claimed that baptism cancelled only previous sins and not subsequent ones; hence it was the custom in Constantine's time to put off baptism until as near the hour of death as possible. The star member Tertullian is said to have supported this view. St. Augustine advanced the erroneous idea that only the Church would be saved and that baptism was for the purpose of induction into the Church.

BISHOPS DISPLACE THE BIBLE

Naturally, it followed that if infants died without being admitted into the Church they would go to eternal torture. As a result of this teaching infant baptism sprang into great popularity, which is still maintained. At first the infants were immersed in water, but later, under the belief that all bishops were successors of the Apostles and equal in authority, Church Councils took the place of the Word of God.

INFANT BAPTISM

They not only sanctioned infant baptism, which is not even mentioned in the Bible, but additionally claimed that immersion was unnecessary, and that a few drops of water would induct the aged or the babe into the Church and constitute an insurance against a hell of

torment. This theory still persists to perhaps a greater degree than many would imagine. Some theologians say, "We practice infant sprinkling, but it is merely a 'christening.' We have no thought whatever that the gracious Heavenly Father or His adorable Son, our Redeemer, would consign an infant to torture, even if it died without being christened." These superstitions die hard. We know of a white-haired bishop who was appalled at the very suggestion that his infant grandchild might be committed to the arms of Jesus without being "christened." Not only so, but these superstitions of a darker day are forcefully impressed upon the "common people" even today by some uninformed theologians.



JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

In examining the doctrine of immersion as set forth by the Christian or Disciple denomination, we are inclined to say that their doctrines are quite inconsistent. In their immersion theory they use many texts as proofs that *baptism is for the remission of sins*, which texts, as given in the Bible, were never intended to apply to any except Jews, for none but Jews ever baptized for forgiveness of sins. The Jews were in Covenant relationship with God through the Mosaic Law. If they got into sin it was proper for them to repent, return to God and use water symbolically, indicating return from sin. In Jesus' day, all Jews who were in full harmony with the end of the Law Covenant for those who accepted Christ, were then transferred from Moses to Christ. Only those who had committed special sins were called upon to wash away those sins symbolically in water. Others living consistent lives as "Israelites indeed" were never instructed to be baptized or to wash away their sins. Amongst the Apostles there is no record of any of them having been immersed in water for the remission of sins, except St. Paul, and he only because he had persecuted the Church of Christ. The baptism into Christ announced for Gentile converts is wholly different from the Jewish baptism for the remission of sins. An illustration of this is found in Acts 18: 24, 25, where Apollos had baptized certain Gentiles of Ephesus with John's baptism for the remission of sins. St. Paul afterward declared this incorrect and directed them to be immersed again—

not for the remission of sins, but for symbolic induction into the Body of Christ, the Church (Acts 19: 1-6). Moreover, Cornelius and others with him, received the Holy Spirit before they were immersed, which proves that their sins had been previously forgiven, since one's sins must be forgiven before he can receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 10: 44-48; 2: 38). But the chief point we would make against the Christian—Disciple theory that baptism is for the remission of sins, is that it dis-fellowships all Christians who have not been immersed. The logic of this theory would find few supporters among their group. The logic of it is this: If

immersion is necessary for an adult in order that his sins may be remitted or washed away, it would logically follow that all adults not immersed are yet in their sins, unforgiven. This signifies, according to this supposition, that if they die they must suffer the penalty of their sins, which penalty, they say, is eternal torture.

BAPTIST'S VIEW

We acknowledge the Baptist view as being more nearly in line with the Scriptures than any other philosophy of baptism held in mainline Christian circles. Yet remarkably few Baptists today could or do stand by their teaching, if put to the test. Nevertheless, in theory and practice, the majority of Baptists declare that immersion is necessary to admission to the Church of God. In full keeping with this, most Baptist Churches only invite immersed Christians to participate in the Lord's Supper. Why? Because they claim that only immersed persons belong to the true Church and that the communion service is exclusively for the Church. If we ask them what are the advantages claimed for membership in the Church, they reply—Salvation! We inquire, what is the alternative to salvation for those not baptized? They answer—such ones are lost! We ask what do you mean by *lost*? The reply is, they are banished from God and suffer everlasting torture. The Baptist view delivers to the un-immersed the same blood curdling theory handed out by the Christian Disciples, and that Catholics, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, etc., are all on the way to eternal torture.

GOD WINKED

St. Paul tells us of certain times of ignorance which “God winked at” and for that remote time period He let it pass. We believe that the Almighty graciously overlooked such inconsistencies in the past theories of some of His children and did not charge them with the responsibility of so terribly maligning the Divine character and misrepresentation of the Divine Word, because the truth on the subject had not been made clear. But now our God is opening the eyes of understanding for all and there is no longer an excuse for any to believe such monstrous theories.

THE SCRIPTURAL BAPTISM

The true view of Bible baptism is one which cannot be refuted. It is consistent with itself and with every Bible statement. Let us examine it in light of the Word.

First of all, it recognizes every consecrated child of God of every denomination, inside or outside of main-line church affiliation. It inducted the saintly Baptist, saintly Disciple, saintly Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Congregationalist, Methodist, etc., into membership in the one Congregation of the Living God, “whose names are written in heaven,” not on earth. You ask, what baptism could this have been? It is the one mentioned by St. Paul in a text which we have all read and quoted time and again: “So many of you as were baptized *into Jesus Christ* were baptized *into His death*” (Rom. 6: 3). The mistake that many made in the past is in applying these words of the Apostle to *water baptism*. The Apostle said not a word about water baptism, but mentioned specifically the baptism into Christ, into “the Body of Christ, which is the Church.” The thought is that God ordained the gathering of the elect Church during the Christian dispensation. Jesus, as the Head of this Church, was received up into glory over nineteen centuries ago and since Pentecost the true footstep followers of Jesus have been accepted of God through Jesus’ merit and counted as “members of the Body of Christ,” which is the Church.

THE WORLD’S HOPE

But there is not a word of Scripture to say that the world, which misses this glorious exaltation, will on this account suffer eternal torture. They will have lost the

great prize, immortality and the Divine nature, however. Water baptism was not the door into the true Church. Our Baptist friends will agree to the above statement. They will say, yes, that is what we mean, only, in order to be in Christ, we claim *water immersion* is necessary.

THE SACRIFICIAL DEATH

We are glad to have their plain, candid statement and to meet the issue squarely, even though, it is a mistake—supposing that water baptism inducted anybody into membership in the true Church. But the question arises, Just what is meant by these words, “Baptized *into His death*?” Was *His* death in any way different from the death of *others*? Most decidedly it was! The whole human race dies as sinners—children of wrath, under Divine sentence of death. But Jesus was not a sinner and hence was not under Divine sentence of death. He was “holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners” and free from Adamic condemnation. His death was a sacrificial one—a surrender of an unimpaired life for the forfeited life of Adam. Those, therefore, who would become His footstep followers and be baptized into His death, must participate with Him in the *sacrificial* death. The Scriptures explain that this would be impossible except as those footstep followers were cleansed and made acceptable sacrifices through the merit of Jesus; because by nature they were “all children of wrath, even as others.” *Death* was the underlying meaning of our Lord’s baptism. John the Immerser knew that Jesus was



Jesus being baptized by John the Baptist

not a sinner, and knew that He had no sins to wash away, and at first he declined to immerse Him. He did so only after Jesus assured him that it was right that he do so and that the matter had a deeper significance. “Suffer it to be so...to fulfill all righteousness.” Perfect righteousness is what the Law demands, which is the obedience of all under it and death to all who disobey it. Jesus fulfilled all righteousness by obeying the Law’s every injunction and by dying to satisfy its demand for the death of the disobedient race. These two things He symbolized: First by His burial (immersion)

under the water; and Second, His obedience in being raised in the new consecrated life by His rising out of the water, thereby symbolizing by immersion that He fulfilled the necessary righteousness.

THE REAL BAPTISM

Our Lord for three and a half years was carrying out His consecration vow made at Nazareth and then at Jordan He symbolized that consecration by His baptism in the Jordan unto death in 29 A.D. Then day by day He became more deeply involved in the events which led to His sacrificial death. That real immersion into death was finished on Calvary in 33 A.D. on the Cross. In harmony with this, shortly before His death Jesus said, “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished” (Luke 12: 50). A little later it was accomplished, when He cried, “It is finished!” His baptism into death was then complete. The same thought the Master gave to His followers, saying to the two who desired places on His right and His left in the Kingdom: “You know not what you ask!” You do not know what is required to secure exaltation into the Kingdom. Are you able and are you willing to drink of My cup of sorrow, self-denial, etc.? Are you willing “to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with”—the baptism of sacrificial death? When the disciples replied that they were willing, the Master assured them, that, if faithful, they would indeed have part in His sacrificial death, but He had not the authority but the Father only, to place those on His right and left in the Kingdom. The terms of discipleship have not changed.

WHAT IS WATER BAPTISM?

Now, what is it that was accomplished by water baptism? It had its place, not in keeping any out of eternal torment, not in getting them into eternal heavenly glory or to earthly restitution in the Millennium, but it is a *symbol*, a beautiful *picture* in one act. It is a testimony to all believers that the consecrated one has vowed loyalty to

the Redeemer even unto death. When God’s people accept Jesus as their personal Savior and consecrate their life to God they are then baptized, not having as yet experienced immersion in water. The Scriptures then point to a public confession that is important and we instruct therefore that all the consecrated undergo water baptism when possible as being the Lord’s provision of an outward confession for those who have accepted His terms, surrendered their all, and are seeking to walk in newness of life and to attain eternal life by and by (Rom. 6: 3-5; Gal. 3: 28; Phil. 3: 10, 11).

THE WORLD’S BAPTISM

As for the unconsecrated world, who have made no commitment to Christ or to God in either justification or consecration, it is fitting that they should not be immersed. Baptism was never intended except for the fully dedicated, those set apart for the Lord. When God’s due time shall come for the conversion of the world of mankind they also will receive the blessings provided for them through the Redeemer’s merit, under the gracious arrangement of the Redeemer’s heavenly and earthly Kingdom (Gen. 22: 16-18), which will be established under the whole heavens for the purpose of uplifting mankind from sin and death—it will be for those who desire everlasting life on the earth, not the heavenly, immortal life of the Church, however. The Restitutionists of that time will need to provide much more than mere lip service to the kingdom’s requirements. They will be required to obey that greater than Moses or they will go into the Second Death (Acts 3: 22, 23).

* * *



“I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know them, and are established in the present truth”—2 Peter 1: 12.

WHAT ARE THE THINGS here referred to? They are spelled out in verses 5-11. We have taken the liberty of putting the exact meaning of the words in these verses making it unnecessary to supply them in brackets. They follow: For this very reason, giving all diligence, add to

your faith fortitude, to fortitude knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control patience, and to patience, piety, and to piety, brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, love. For, if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To be anchored in the Truth signifies that we have carefully studied and thoroughly proved it by “the law and the testimony” (Isa. 8: 20), and that as a consequence we are convinced of its truthfulness, so that our

faith is steadfast and immovable. We know what we have believed; we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good; we have partaken of the sweets of fellowship with Him; we have partaken of His spirit of meekness, faith and holiness to such an extent as to be led into a joyful realization of the fullness of His grace as manifested in the wonderful Divine plan of the ages. We have been permitted to see not only the various features of that plan, but also the necessity and reasonableness of all its various measures in order to the full accomplishment of its glorious outcome in the fullness of the appointed times, not only for the Church and its “high calling” privileges now complete, but also for the future, in the Millennium with the “Restitution of all things” for the world (Acts 3: 19-21). This is what it means to be anchored in the present Truth. It is indeed a most blessed condition, bringing with it such peace and joy as the world can neither give nor take away—John 14: 27; 16: 22.

FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH

But though we are “established in the present Truth,” we need to bear in mind that our selection to the Millennial position in the earthly phase of the Kingdom, to which we are called, is not yet made sure. The race for the prize of everlasting life for which we strive is still unfinished; and we are yet in the enemy’s country, surrounded by many subtle and powerful foes who would deprive us of our goal if we are not diligent. If we would be successful we must “fight the good fight of faith,” remembering, too, that the weapons of our warfare are not guns, bombs and swords, but [Bible Truth is the weapon used Eph. 6: 13-17], it is mighty to the pulling down of the fortifications of error and superstition and of inbred sin. Remembering that, “we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places”—Satan and the fallen angels (2 Cor. 10: 4; Eph. 6: 12). It is in view of these facts, of the warfare before us, of the subtleness of our temptations and of the weakness of our flesh, that the Apostle Peter urges all diligence in the cultivation of the Christian graces and a continual calling to remembrance of the precious truths we have learned, that we may be strengthened thereby to make our calling and election sure. Faith is a good thing; but faith without honorable works is dead; and to hold the Truth in unrighteousness is worse than never to have received it. The Truth is given to us for its cleansing effect upon our hearts and lives. Therefore, let it have free course and be glorified. Let its precious character graces—fruits, appear more and more from day to day.

Add to your faith fortitude—true excellence of character, such excellence of character as will mark you as separate from the world and its spirit. The world will see and approve these moral qualities even though they stumble over our faith. Add honesty, truth and fair dealing in our business relations; moral integrity in our social relations; and clean hands, a pure heart and a bridled tongue that works no ill to a neighbor. The world has a right to expect proficiency in well doing from those of us who call ourselves Christians; and these are indispensable features of a righteous character which must be added to our faith. Clean hands will not dabble in anything that is not upright: we will have nothing to do with unrighteous schemes or projects in business. The pure heart will not devise evil things, nor harbor evil thoughts, nor plot mischief. The bridled tongue will not be given to evil speaking, but will hold its peace when it cannot speak well and wisely. But the promptings of virtue go further than merely these negative features which refuse to do anything which would work ill to a neighbor. They incite not only to passive, but also to active, goodness—in benevolent charity which seeks to alleviate suffering, to sympathize with sorrow, to comfort those in distress and to elevate and bless others and to assist “all men as we have opportunity.”

ADD KNOWLEDGE

To such a good character we are counseled to add knowledge—the knowledge of God’s character, that we may the more thoroughly imitate it, and of His Truth that we may more fully conform to its teachings: and to knowledge, moderation, self-restraint, in all things. “Let your moderation be known unto all men.” We are not to be hasty and hot-tempered, or rash and thoughtless. But we should strive to be evenly balanced, thoughtful and considerate: our whole manner should be characterized by that carefulness which would indicate that we are ever mindful of the Lord’s pleasure, of our responsibility to Him as His representatives, and of our influence upon our fellow men, to see that we are always for good, never for evil. Let us develop patience. “Let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, wanting nothing.” This character grace of patience smoothes the way for every other trait, because all must be acquired under the process of patient and continuous self-discipline. Not a step of progress can be gained without the exercise of this grace of patience; and not one of the graces more beautifully adorns the Christian character, or wins the approval of the world’s conscience, or glorifies the God of all grace whose Truth inspires it. It is long-suffering meekness earnestly striving to stem the

tide of human imperfection and weakness, and endeavoring with painstaking care to regain the Divine likeness. It is slow to wrath and abundant in mercy; it is quick to perceive the paths of truth and righteousness, and prompt to walk in them: it is mindful of its own imperfections and sympathetic with the imperfections and shortcomings of others.

“And to patience, godliness”—[piety] a careful study and imitation of a righteous character operating toward God as instructed by the Divine Word. “And [then add] to godliness, brotherly kindness”—this is an exercise in justice and the manifestation of the principles of a just character toward our fellow men. Last of all add “to brotherly kindness, charity.” In this one verse we have love presented from two standpoints. The first is the love

of justice which is “brotherly kindness” and the second is disinterested love, translated “charity.” The present use of the word charity (giving to the poor) does not convey the meaning of the Greek word from which it is translated. Therefore, disinterested love would best describe its meaning. What is disinterested love? It is not a love that has no interest in others, for interest in others is the very essence of love. Rather, the idea of disinterested love is that a person does not consider his own self-interest, when performing this form of love towards others; for thereby we do things for others that would not be to our own immediate benefit. It is a love that does not look out for the interests of self, but a love that looks out for the interests of others, in harmony with good principles. It is a love that does not “seek its own” benefit (1 Cor. 13: 5), but seeks good for others. This is what is meant by the word charity in the Bible and is best described as disinterested love. The idea is that disinterested love, ignoring self-interest looks out for the well-being of others, and that even at the expense of self-interest. A love such as this was engaged in by God, the Father, and by His Son, our Lord Jesus as stated in John 3: 16: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should

not perish but have everlasting life.” That was a most wonderful manifestation of the love of charity—disinterested love.

To carry this thought of disinterested love—charity further, even though its expression may be in the nature of discipline it must always have good will as the intention. And the love of sympathy for the fallen and degraded race grows, until it becomes tender and solicitous and similar to that of a parent for an erring child, where the father may punish a misbehaving child for his or her reformation and ultimate good.

LIFELONG WORK

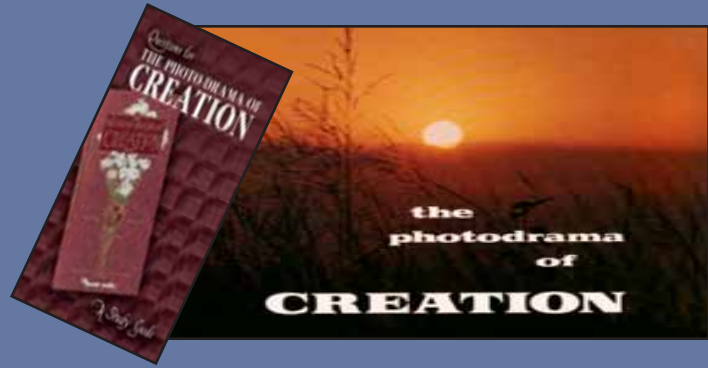
Peter indeed describes a most amiable character, but who can consider it without feeling that to attain it will be a



life work. It cannot be accomplished in a day, or a year, but the whole life must be devoted to it; and day by day, if we are faithful, we should realize a measure of growth in grace and of development of Christian character. It is not enough that we know the intellectual side of the Truth, the doctrines and promises, and stop there and are contented to hold it with no further progress. We must see to it that the Truth is having its designed effect upon our character and that is where the spirit of the Truth comes into play. If the Truth is thereby received into good and honest hearts, we have the assurance of the Apostle that we shall never fall, and that in due time we shall be received into the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Hence we

see the necessity of ever keeping the instructions and precepts (what we should do and not do) in our service to the Lord fresh in our minds, and of drinking deep into its inspiring spirit, although we are already, to a certain extent, anchored in the faith. To be established in the faith (the doctrines) is one thing, but for it to be established in the Christian character is quite another. Both are requisite to the attainment of salvation in the earthly Kingdom as it was also true of the heavenly realm with Jesus and the Church.

* * *



GOD'S GLORY IN THE HEAVENS

"The reverence of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom." Only the foolish say in their heart, "There is no God." "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." "The heavens declare the glory of God."—Psalms 111:10; 14:1; 19:1,2

An appreciation of the infinite Power of the Creator and of our own littleness should make us teachable. The study of Creation is the "Key of Knowledge." Using this Key we begin to realize that the only worthy ambition is to co-operate with our Creator's beneficent designs respecting His Creation.

The planets of our System compared with our Sun are as nothing. Imagine the Sun's diameter that of a large flour barrel: Jupiter would compare as a small orange, Earth and Venus as peas, and Mercury and Mars as raspberry seeds.

The Sun is three hundred thousand times the size of our Earth. A train at thirty miles an hour could go around the Earth in one month, but three hundred and forty years would be required for it to travel the circumference of the Sun.

Our day and night are the result of the Earth's rotation on its own axis, while its motion around the Sun marks our year. Planets nearer the Sun have shorter orbits, and hence, shorter years, while remote ones have longer years. A year on the planet Mercury would equal three of our months. On Neptune, farthest off, a year equals 164 of Earth's years.

Yet our Sun is only *one* of the *fixed stars*, of which the most up-to-date astronomical methods estimate there are one hundred and twenty-five millions. Around each of these *fixed stars* undoubtedly revolves a planetary System like our own. Thus reckoned, there are one thousand million worlds. Even this is not the limit. If we should stand upon the farthest and dimmest star, we should no doubt from there see as many more beyond. We are appalled at the greatness of the Universe.

The zodiacal signs illustrate various sections of the heavens, visible at different seasons.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON 1

- 1 What is Wisdom? See Dictionary. See Reprints, page 493, Col. 1, Line 35.
- 2 When does True Wisdom begin? Psa. 111: 10
- 3 What does the Bible say about the person who denies the existence of God? Psa. 14: 1
- 4 What does Psa. 19: 1, 2 mean?
- 5 What should make us teachable? See Par. 2
Prov. 1: 7; 4: 13
- 6 What study will give us the Key of Knowledge?
- 7 Name the planets in our Solar System? Par. 3 Is there any difference between a planet and a star?
- 8 Considering the earth the size of a large flour barrel, how large would the other planets be in comparison?
- 9 Can any of these planets be seen now? See Almanac.
- 10 Is the sun larger or smaller than the earth and how much? Par. 4
- 11 How long would it take a train traveling at the rate of 30 miles per hour to go around the earth? How long to go around the sun? About how much quicker could it be made in an airplane?
- 12 What causes our day and night? What produces our year? Neptune's? Par. 5
- 13 Which planets have shorter years? Which ones longer years? How long is Mercury's year? Neptune's?
- 14 What is our Sun called and why? Par. 6
- 15 How many of these suns are there?
- 16 If each sun is the center of a planetary system, how many worlds may be estimated?
- 17 Is this probably the limit? Why or why not?

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Bible Questions and Answers

Q In 1 Cor. 11: 26 we read, “For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.” How often should we do this?

A Some, mistakenly claim that these words mean that we should partake of the Lord’s Supper very often—every month, every week, or even every day if possible. To the contrary, the words “as often as” do not direct us to partake of the Lord’s Supper frequently; they simply mean whenever we celebrate. The Apostle Paul was not making a specific command, he was merely setting forth a fact, which was, that whenever God’s people celebrate the Memorial—and, of course, a memorial is properly celebrated on the anniversary of the death of the one for whom the memorial is kept—they show forth, and declare the Savior’s death. How do they do this? It will be noticed that the accounts of the institution of the Lord’s Supper tell us that, after Jesus blessed the bread He broke it (Matt. 26: 26; Mark 14: 22; Luke 22: 19; 1 Cor. 11: 23, 24). Therefore the breaking of the bread, coming after the blessing of the bread, is an essential part of the service; for it represents, the breaking or sacrifice of our Lord’s humanity unto death. Our Lord while mentioning the things symbolized, said that His blood was shed for the forgiveness of man’s sins (Matt. 26: 28). Our eating of the unleavened bread, which represents His body broken for us, and our drinking of the cup, which symbolizes His blood shed for us—in other words, our appropriating to ourselves that which symbolizes His human righteousness with its accompanying right to life and life-rights—represents our appropriating justification by faith in the merit of His vicarious sacrifice. By using these figures we declare, our Lord’s death when we keep His Memorial.

Let us consider how often we should commemorate Jesus’ death: Jesus was crucified and died on the fourteenth of the Jewish month, Nisan, or Abib, the very same 24-hour day that the typical Passover lamb was slain. The specific day is important because it was in fulfillment of the type—the death of the lamb. How fitting it is therefore, that all Christians should commemorate on the night of the same 24-hour day on which our Passover Lamb (1 Cor. 5: 7, 8) was slain, and thus memorialize our Lord’s death on its anniversary! It was our Lord’s instruction therefore, that this day be observed annually in remembrance of Him. “After supper” (1 Cor. 11: 25;—ASV), which finished the final observance of the typical Passover for Himself and His disciples, He instituted the new, the Lord’s Supper, using new symbols—the bread and the fruit of the vine—to take the place of the old, the typical annual lamb. He gave these new symbols to His disciples, saying: “This do in remembrance of me [keep no longer the typical Passover supper each year, but instead use these new emblems each year in the antitypical supper—the Memorial—to commemorate Me and My sacrifice as the antitypical Passover Lamb of God]” (Luke 22: 19).

The death of Christ, as the antitype of the Passover lamb slain in Egypt, can be commemorated at no other time so appropriate as on the regular anniversary. This is the evening of the fourteenth day of Nisan, or Abib, the first month, lunar time (Ex. 12: 2- 8; Lev. 23: 5; Num. 9: 1-3; 28: 16), regardless of which day of the week it may come, just as Jesus did. According to God’s reckoning (Gen. 1: 5, 8) in the “evening,” the night period of a 24-hour day, beginning at 6 p.m., precedes its “morning,” or day period, which begins at 6 a.m. This year the fourteenth of Nisan begins at 6 p.m., March 31.

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MEMORIAL DATE FOR 2007

Saturday, March 31, after 6:00 p.m.

The Memorial date this year comes on March 31 after 6:00 p.m. The newing of the moon nearest the vernal equinox, at Jerusalem, occurs at 5:05 a.m. March 19. Accordingly Nisan 1 begins at 6:00 p.m. March 18 and Nisan 14 begins at 6:00 p.m. thirteen days later, or at 6:00 p.m. on March 31. May the Lord bless His consecrated people as we properly prepare ourselves to commemorate Him and His great sacrifice for us (1 Cor. 5: 7, 8)!

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- Spiritual and human natures are distinct and separate.
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