

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

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ISLAM — MOHAMMED AND THE MUSLIMS



THE Islamic religion claims about 1.84 billion adherents in Asia, Africa and Europe, with growing numbers in the Americas. In recent years, Islam (often called Mohammedanism) and the Muslims have increasingly come to the fore, attracting worldwide attention as a result of the wide and sustained media coverage of terrorist acts of Islamic extremists. The continued fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq, the terrorism of 9/11 in the United States, the bombing of the Spanish trains and the London Underground, Iran supporting Hezbollah and Hamas and the developing of nuclear weapons by Iran. All of these events have added to the general uncertainty of the Time of Trouble of this our day. This is due, in part, to the oil-rich Muslim countries exerting their influence on other nations, the Arab-Israeli and Iraq-Iran conflicts, the growing Black Muslim movement in the U.S. and their and Hanafi Muslims' acts.

Because of this wide publicity, many have inquired about the origin and history of Islam and the Muslims, and of their doctrines and practices, whether or not the Muslims accept the Bible's Old and New Testament teachings, how their teachings compare with Bible teachings and what are the good points and the weaknesses in Islamic teachings. We therefore present this treatise, hoping it will be informative and helpful to many.

The word *Islam* means *submission and surrender to the will of Allah* (Arabic for God). The name Muslim is also spelled Moslem (in some places Mussulman is used). It means literally, *one who submits, or surrenders, to the will of Allah*. Muslims believe that Mohammed was God's Prophet. Mohammed (born 570 A.D., died 632) claimed that he received many revelations in Arabic from Allah (God) through the angel Gabriel. These form the Koran, or Quran (meaning *recitation, reading*), a book divided into 114 chapters, called *suras*. We will give some references and quotations from the book as we proceed. Having given these few preliminary

explanatory remarks, we now proceed to set forth some pre-Islamic Arab history, a biography of Mohammed, an account of his successors and the growth of Islam, its holy writings, schisms and sects, and a comparison of its teachings with the Bible, especially the teachings of Jesus, manifesting the latter's great superiority.

ARABIA BEFORE MOHAMMED THE "DAYS OF IGNORANCE" IN ARABIA

Mohammed indicates that, until he came, the Arabs had had no guide since Ishmael (other than perhaps the vague Luqman, or Lokman—said to have lived in David and Solomon's day; sura 31). These so-called "days of ignorance" (see sura 36: 1-5; 34: 43) show some strange contrasts. Tribal life in Arabia bred a love of open spaces, a deep sense of loyalty to leaders and a fanatical desire for independence. Yet, such was the Arabs' pride in physical prowess that they would readily follow a good leader into war. They were fanatically sensitive to points of honor. This bred in the worst of them a cruel disregard of the rights of others, and in the best, a higher degree of chivalry, integrity and fidelity. Hospitality, even to strangers, was freely bestowed.

The Arabs had evaded assimilation into the Persian Empire. "Home" to them was the expanse of desert land. Their swift movements, hardihood and knowledge of the desert made conventional warfare useless against them, while in sudden strikes their swords took a heavy toll. Although most Arabs were illiterate, their language was admirably suited to their life, containing expressions of beauty, wisdom and noble sentiment. Poets were a part of their fighting tribes.

Arab pride, however, was selfish; it often did not protect the vulnerable. A girl was married long before puberty, lest she bring dishonor on her father. In some instances, young girls were buried alive. Such terrible injustices prevailed as dark and evil products of their

way of life, though some good men gave even their lives, to save others from suffering and death under established customs. So low was the value placed on human life, when compared with personal or tribal honor, that accidental death caused by another was not distinguished from murder. Both were avenged by retaliatory killing. Blood money was despised, and feuds existed continually.

Social justice was haphazard, as “wise men,” sorceresses and oracles were consulted in deciding troublesome cases. Only where honor was not involved did fear of civil strife and slaughter lead to compromise and forbearance. Where tribes became small, or extreme admiration for a hero-figure was strong, loyalties would often swing toward another chosen clan or leader. Genealogies in pre-Islamic days were honored and often consulted but were very unreliable as to blood relationships, frequently owing more to adoptions into stronger tribes rather than to being born into them.

THE LAND—MECCA, MEDINA AND YEMEN

Arabia is largely desert, with some tracks and caravan routes. Only two reliable motor roads, which converge at Riyadh, link the Persian Gulf with the Red Sea. Ancient customs and culture are still common, in Arab countries even today. Though most Arab states are fabulously oil-rich, their social and technological progress has been very slow, inhibited by autocratic rulers and Islamic extremists. Before Mohammed's day, Arabia was saved from obscurity only by unorganized trading, as caravans moved to and from old Sheba in the South, and from Mecca across to the Persian Gulf and on to Muscat, an Arabian port on the Gulf of Oman.

Mecca, then a place of artisans and merchants, had little to commend it other than the proximity of the sanctuary, or Kaaba, containing the famous Black Stone. Tribes gathered there, communicated and exchanged their produce. Idolatry and licentious rites abounded, which Meccans fought to retain when reform threatened. About 200 miles north of Mecca was Yathrib, later called Medina, “City of the Prophet.” Jewish colonists had settled there; some were said to have been even from Moses' day. Just prior to Mohammed's historic appearance, this influential Jewish population, in civil conflict with a powerful, idolatrous tribe of Arabs, was enslaved. Christian communities, too, existed in the South,

largely of Gnostic origin, but strongly affected by Nestorian teachings, which had an energetic missionary center in Iraq.

About 400 miles south of Mecca was Yemen, the ancient Saba, by many believed to be the Sheba whose queen put difficult questions to Solomon (1 Kings 10). This part of Arabia was greatly influenced by Judaism in the first 500 years A.D., with many converts from Arab ruling classes, their subjects and neighboring tribes. Later, Christianity gained ground rapidly.

RELIGION AND THE KAABA

Before Mohammed, religion among the Arabs was, generally speaking, of two kinds—(1) the Sabean (Job 1: 15; Isa. 45: 14; Joel 3: 8), an old form of Semitic idolatry of Mesopotamian origin and imbued with Hindu polytheism (belief in a plurality of Gods). Both Greek and Arabic writers attest that, among the early pagan Arabs, stones were worshiped; (2) the Hanyf (*sound in faith*) monotheists who linked themselves with Abraham through Ishmael. Mohammed knew of

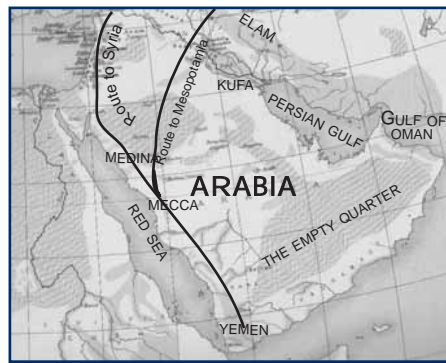
this link and used it in validation of his claim to supersede the Jewish prophets and Jesus, saying that Abraham was neither Jew nor Christian (sura 3: 60, 89; 4: 162; 16: 121).

A vague tendency to uniformity prevailed among the Arabs where the unity of God and morality were not at issue. Three months in the Fall and one in the Spring were holy months, in which no wars were fought and pilgrimages were made to holy places. The rest of the year there were constant wars or local skirmishes, and life was hard, poor and dangerous for most Arabs.

The Christianity of the Eastern Roman Empire, centered in Constantinople, was carried orally into Arabia by settlers and traders. Zoroaster had stirred Persia with his monotheistic teachings, but although still active, these had become pale and corrupt in comparison to the powerful moral force felt in his day.

Judaism had degenerated into formalistic ritual observance and had lost much of that vital spark which incited Jews of former and later days to heroism.

In the Mecca valley was the Kaaba, with its famous Black Stone. Legend says the stone (possibly a meteorite, about 7 inches in diameter) was given to Adam on his being barred from Eden, and that it originally was white but became black by absorbing the sins of those who kissed or handled it. The Kaaba (the legend says) was first set up by Adam, and later Abraham and



Ishmael rebuilt it (sura 22: 27; 3: 91). Prominent from ancient times, it has been a focal point for all Arabs even to our day.

MOVEMENT TOWARD REFORM AND A SPIRIT OF UNITY

As Mohammed's day approached, changes were imminent. The Byzantine and Persian civilizations had strengthened Arabian trade routes. Commercial influences challenged the old ways. Emerging trade and wealth were endangered by fighting clans and nomads. Travelers to and from Greek and Persian cultures despised and ridiculed the customs of old Arabia; this galled the proud Arabs and prompted attempts at reform.

Jews for centuries—and Christians later—had filtered into lands north and south of Mecca. Their teachings stimulated discussion, promoted reform and attracted many converts. Typical of these was Warakah the Meccan (a relative of Kadijah, Mohammed's first wife). He became a Christian and is credited with translating at least the Nativity part of the Gospels into Arabic. This was useful to Mohammed in later years. Another, Zaid, was a great reformer of the old Sabeian religion in Mecca, proclaiming the unity of God, the evils of idolatry and the need for moral and religious changes.

A new spirit of unity pervaded the traditionally divided people, especially after the battle of Dhu Kar, when a daring Bedouin chief, whose honor was at stake, defied the full force of the Persian southern army and by courage and stratagem won a victory that shook the idea of the Persians' invincibility. The rising tide of Arab nationalism presaged a future conquest of the empire of the Khosroes (Persian kings of the Sassanid dynasty). Mohammed's claim to a Divine appointment came to an Arab world prepared for unification, ready to challenge the old ways, and to replace the debasement and debauchery inherent in idolatrous practices with a more civilized and disciplined order of society.

THE LIFE OF MOHAMMED ORIGINS AND EARLY LIFE

Mohammed (meaning *praised*) was born in Mecca. His parents' names are given as Abdullah (*servant of Allah*) and Aminah (*secure*), of the Hashem family. The Hashemites were of the powerful Koreish tribe, which then predominated in Mecca. Arab genealogists alone make Koreish a person, in a fanciful line of tribal progenitors. Ali, Mohammed's cousin, declared the Koreish to be Nabateans, nomadic Semitic Arabian traders of about 500 B.C., who developed a remarkable civilization 200 years later centered in Petra, in Jordan. Authorities agree that the origin of the Koreish tribe is

unknown, although some say that they claimed descent from Joktan (Gen. 10: 22-30) and not from Abraham, a descendant of Peleg, Joktan's brother (Gen. 10: 25; 11: 17-27). From Joktan sprang the 13 tribes of Arabia (1 Chron. 1: 19-23). Many Biblical maps show Joktan's descendants as inhabiting the central and eastern Arabian highlands, where Mecca lies.

"Adopting" a tribe for such reasons as social acceptability, safety or honor was common, and any pre-Islamic Arab's true lineage remains at best, a matter for conjecture. Thus, we see that Mohammed's line of descent is uncertain; any search, soon becomes lost in the obscurity of unrecorded genealogies, further confounded by the Arabic genius for imaginative invention. Being of the prominent Hashem family and preeminent Koreish tribe, Mohammed could claim to be "Araba el Araba" (*an Arab of Arabs*). Similarly, the Apostle Paul referred to himself as a "Hebrew of the Hebrews" (Phil. 3: 5). Mohammed was nevertheless of modest stock; his father was a merchant of the poorer kind, who died about the time he was born. He joined the large family of Abdul-Muttalib, his grandfather. He is said to have been nursed for about two years by Halima, wife of a Saadite shepherd, because his mother could not nurse him properly. When he was six, his mother died also (sura 93: 6-11). Two years later Abdul-Muttalib died, leaving the lad with his son, Mohammed's uncle Abu Talib.

Of Mohammed's boyhood years no records are available, but the generally accepted opinion is that he tended sheep and camels, as his half-brother Jafar is shown to have done. In his later years Mohammed still cared for his own camel and branded with tar camels and sheep that were received as alms. Abu Talib, also a merchant trading in fruits, spices and perfumes, was more prosperous than Mohammed's father. Mohammed was taken into the business and soon became a capable traveling agent. At 25, he attracted and was employed by a wealthy widow merchant, Kadijah. Shortly thereafter she, 15 years his senior, proposed marriage. Mohammed accepted and continued to live in Mecca, but as a successful merchant trader.

RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT AND VISIONS AT MECCA

Mohammed was contemplative, with a strongly marked moral earnestness reflected in the teachings of the Koran. His poetical mind and predisposition for pompous, oracular speech marked him early. His character seems in large measure to have been gentle and sincere; he attracted unswerving loyalty from his closest companions throughout their lives. Mohammed's years of traveling were in many ways a preparation for his future work. Life with the camel trains of the old

trade routes brought acquaintance with dangers and difficulties of many kinds, and developed him as one of resolution, resourcefulness and hardiness. His quick mind and perceptive eyes no doubt gathered much from the strengths and weaknesses of the cultures and religions he encountered. His journeys took him to both backward and progressive nations, and among Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians and pagans.

The humanitarian tendencies in Mohammed's teachings and his effect on his "Companions," allied to his mystical qualities, would not only have drawn him toward a desire for reform, but would have led him to seek religious reform as essential to reach the roots of the problems facing what he saw as a degraded world order. It is therefore not strange, that in later years, his desire for reform intensified and 13 years after his first marriage he took those fateful steps which brought him into prominence as a religious teacher of world-wide and historic influence.

At 38, Mohammed began to withdraw himself from others in moods of deep contemplation and self-mortification. For two years he would periodically retire into a cave in Mount Hira, about three miles away on the road to Taif. There, in the grip of powerful emotions, he claimed to have revelations from God mediated through the angel Gabriel (sura 2: 91, 92; 81: 19-21; 64: 4). At first he confided these things to no one except Kadijah, other family members and his friend Abu Bekr. Mohammed appears to have seen himself as a reformer of his people after the manner of Zaid, seeking a higher form of worship and a reform of evil social and religious conditions. At 40, however, he emerged to declare himself a prophet of God, sent to the Hashemites for the purpose of cleansing them. During the next three years, as these "revelations" continued, the matter spread to others, so that before he was 44, he had gathered some 40 followers, generally poorer people.

Mohammed would utter short, rhyming sentences, which were recorded by his literate hearers, or remembered by others. Such records as were made until his death were written on whatever was at hand—a palm leaf, a piece of leather, a stone or the shoulder blade of a camel—and collected by his wives for safe-keeping. They were later compiled together with verbal accounts from his "Companions," into the suras (chapters) of the Koran. Some have claimed that he was probably an epileptic. Accounts show something of an abnormal physical condition at the time of his revelations, but no serious malady.

Regarding these early Meccan days, a Christian should find little fault with Mohammed, as he

preached against gambling, alcohol, usury, idolatry, superstition and immorality, and upheld piety and taught belief in an all-mighty, all-wise, everlasting, indivisible, all-just yet merciful God. He seemed to pay little heed to the Kaaba in those formative years but looked rather to Jerusalem. In his 44th year (613 A.D.), Mohammed proclaimed himself publicly to all at Mecca as a prophet sent by God to reform their religion and to put down all idolatry there. His message was "strange" to the traditionally minded Meccans; many feared the effect of his preaching on their moral license. They derided him and regarded his obscure utterances as ramblings of a lunatic. To the fanatically idolatrous this new doctrine was frankly subversive and intolerable. Persecution and ridicule mounted until new converts migrated, for safety's sake, to Abyssinia, Yemen and Yathrib. But this had the effect of advertising the new faith still further afield.

The Yathrib Jews, after suffering years of slavery, had then recently regained much civil liberty by victory in a battle with their tribal Arab oppressors. At this, the city's Arab inhabitants, who had become accustomed to the Jews' crying for their Messiah to appear and to relieve them from the power of their adversaries, pondered with their customary superstition over the power of the Israelitish God. Thus the fugitive Meccan Muslims appeared as missionaries for a new phase of the old Abrahamic, monotheistic faith. Some at Yathrib were converted to Islam, and many more were kindly disposed toward the newcomers.

Mohammed himself fled to Taif; there he made some converts, and had a profound effect on caravan people, who were renowned as news-bearers, and his fame spread across the Arab lands and even further afield.

To the sensitive Mohammed, the ill-treatment he met became a catalyst, as in his contemplative isolation his sense of purpose and destiny crystallized and led him to confront his persecutors. Later he returned to Mecca with the same message. So great was the Meccans' fury that he fled for his life to Yathrib, where a friendly reception was assured.

MOHAMMED'S FLIGHT

Mohammed's flight, or Hegira (*separation*), began on July 16, 622 A.D., marking the time from which all Muslim chronology is calculated. Beginning then, a year of 354 days was used—that is, 100 solar years equal about 103 Mohammedan years. The year 2007 is the year 1428 for Islam. Mohammed was received in Medina with acclaim. Over 100 converted families had preceded him, and many others had been converted while on pilgrimage to the Kaaba.

Yathrib had been racked with civil strife, and Arabs were relieved to find one who could unite them. Furthermore, many feared that coming with the names of Jewish prophets on his lips, he might be taken by the Jews, as the Messiah. Jews were at first relieved to find an Arab they could agree with on the unity of God and the Divine commission of the Jewish Prophets. Even the Christians were comforted by Mohammed's almost reverential respect for Jesus as one "sent" by God.

Mohammed quickly became leader, lawgiver and judge to a city, with the support of two powerful tribes. Yathrib became "Medinet-al-Nabi" (*the city of the prophet*), by which name it has ever since been known. At this time in Medina the seeds of an empire were sown.

THE FOUNDING OF ISLAM

Mohammed had come to see himself as the sum and seal of all the former prophets of the Jews and of Jesus. His superficial acquaintance with Judaism had stimulated his imagination, but this was no substitute for the deep study of the Jewish Bible and traditions required even to obtain a hearing before such a community. The early hopes of both Mohammed and the Medinan Jews were dashed when they rejected him outright as "their" prophet from God. Thus the enthusiastic introductions gave way to estrangement, and a bitter Mohammed subsequently formulated laws which relegated the "People of the Book" (sura 3: 62-64, *etc.*), Jew or Christian, to second-class citizenship, at best—a situation remaining in Islam until now.

Mohammed then turned his attention to local conquest. His countenancing and encouraging war with carnal weapons on opponents was a decisive step, probably occasioned by his mistakenly thinking it was the only way to provide the means of life for the newly constituted community.

After, by force, suppressing the Jews, a series of encounters with Meccans further isolated the new religionists, as he with his band of exiled companions and a marauding horde of bandits turned to robbing in woods and mountainous regions and to plundering caravans, even in the months forbidden. As each grave doubt of such conduct arose among his followers, he countered by announcing a "revelation" which justified his course of action. Eventually his sheer success led to the swelling of his ranks by local tribesmen eager for booty.

It was at this time and because of Jewish sneers, that a sudden "revelation" bade Mohammed turn his back when praying toward the Jewish "Kiblah" (*prayer-direction east*), Jerusalem, so as to face instead the Kaaba. He initiated a new fast, the ninth month, Ramadan, to replace the Day of Atonement. Kissing

the Black Stone in the Kaaba was authorized. Ramadan and some of its duties and ceremonies were a merger of the age-old customs of the Arabians, useful aspects of Judaism and the needs of a life of banditry.

THE BATTLE OF BADR AND EMPIRES CHALLENGED

A fateful battle was fought against a Meccan army in 624 at Badr, 180 miles north of Mecca. About 300 Muslims faced 600 to 1,000 Meccans. The battle appears to have been determined by personal combat between three champions from each side; all three Meccans were killed. The Meccan army fled and Mohammed proclaimed the victory as due to Divine assistance. To him the defeat of the Meccans confirmed the policy of *jihad* (holy war) against unbelievers (non-Muslims) as Divinely authorized. Muslims who died in battle were promised a future life with fleshly pleasures (such as dark-eyed women) in Allah's Garden of Delight, a condition painted with word-pictures to incite the Arabians to fanatical joy in fighting for Mohammed.

Later, however, the Meccans utterly routed Mohammed and his followers, badly wounding him. Muslim ranks later swelled with many warlike adventurers. There followed five years of plundering rich Jewish colonies, and bitter warfare with Mecca. Acts of treachery, use of assassins, torture, public executions, personal vendettas and bloodshed abounded. Arabia, especially the Hijaz on the Red Sea coast, abounded in anarchy and destruction.

Eventually, Mohammed with a force of 10,000 marched on Mecca. It surrendered and he, as civil, religious and military leader, was acknowledged as master of all Arabia. On his triumphal entry into Mecca in 630 A.D., he caused the Kaaba's 360 idols (but not the Black Stone) to be destroyed. This policy won to Islam many Christian iconoclasts and some Jews who had long sought freedom from the encroaching influences of popular heathen practices.

Even before Mohammed's accession to power in Arabia, he had sent letters to rulers of the lands surrounding Arabia, inviting kings and peoples to convert to Islam. His letter to Heraclius, Christian emperor of Byzantium, who ruled from Constantinople, reads as follows, according to Ibn Abbas:

MOHAMMED'S LETTER TO HERACLIUS

"In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful. From Mohammed, the servant of Allah and His Messenger, to Heraclius, the Chief of the Roman Empire. Peace be with him who follows the guidance. After this, I invite thee with invitation to Islam.

Become a Muslim and thou wilt be in peace—Allah will give thee a double reward; but if thou turnest away, on thee will be the sin of thy subjects. And, O followers of the Book! Come to an equitable proposition between us and you that we shall not serve any but Allah, and that we shall not associate aught with Him, and that some of us shall not take others for lords besides Allah: but if they turn back, then say: Bear witness that we are Muslims” (Bukhari, Book 1, Chap. 1). Heraclius replied diplomatically, and the King of Ethiopia favored conversion, but the Persian monarch, Chosroes II, was outraged.

Mohammed’s “sayings” continued apace and were remembered, or stored away when recorded. Early insinuations about his sanity died as he gained power. From his “Companions” came the validation of his sayings, as the substance of the Koran and Islamic orthodoxy. Then, too, was the time of Medina’s theological elevation, which was to play a critical part later. Thus the Hegira began the setting up of a new, completely independent community. Mohammed’s final acts epitomized the character of the nascent Islamic Empire. On the one hand he prepared for war against Syria and on the other he made a pilgrimage to the Mecca Valley, and on Mount Arafat decreed for posterity the ceremonies of the “*Hajj*” (*pilgrimage*). Islam was to unite church, state and the way of life of all its followers, in a mission to convert the world.

DEATH OF MOHAMMED

Mohammed died at 63, soon after his return from Arafat, on June 8, 632 A.D. With declining strength, he participated in public prayers as long as he could, and then was carried into his tent and died in the lap of Ayesha, his favorite wife, believing that his death was caused by a poisoning three years earlier by Zainab; a Jewish female slave. The consensus of opinion is that he died from office burdens and vitality reduced by “pleasure-taking in the harem” with his many wives.

Ali claimed that Mohammed had nominated him as his successor—a claim which later split Islam into its primary schism. Ayesha, Abu Bakr’s daughter, insisted that Ali was not then present—but since her father was to succeed Mohammed, her evidence is not without suspicion. She continued opposing Ali until he acceded to the Caliphate in 656, when she was removed from influence until her death in 677.

Mohammed left a princely harem, composed mostly of gift-women from admiring tribes and the daughters of conquered chiefs. This may not have meant a life of debauchery, as some of his religious opponents

claim, although these women were obviously not merely ornamental. His children died young, except his daughter Fatimah, who married Ali.

MOHAMMED’S CHARACTER A CONTRADICTION

Because of the religious and military threat posed by Islam to the peoples of Europe and of Asia before its conversion, it is unlikely that history could have left us an unbiased account of Mohammed. Yet all testify that he was strange and in many ways self-contradictory. He was of fervent belief in one God of heaven and earth, with a moral earnestness and much given to pompous, oracular wisdom. Mohammed was responsible, in an age of lawlessness and bestial cruelty, for some statutes providing protection for women, children, slaves and animals. Evidence abounds of his shrewdness as a judge, while as an administrator and statesman he bound together the wild, scattered tribes and the trading communities of Arabia, and gave them a sense of national unity, dignity and purpose. Nevertheless, he was not content to let teachings, preaching and good example do the conquering (the Christian Crusaders later made the same mistake).

In connection with furthering Islam, accounts of bloodshed and traffic in souls abound also. The slaughter of entire male communities, the enslaving of women and the bringing up of resultant orphans as Muslims, mar the image of Mohammed. The assassination of key opponents and other such barbarous acts recorded as done by his authority, add to the indications that, in his turbulent later years, he was unable to clear himself of his primitive Arab disgraces.

Mohammed’s bitterness against the Jews never ceased to abate. He believed from Christian teachings (Matt. 23: 37; Heb. 11: 37, *etc.*) that as a prophet sent to them by God, they sought his life. He nevertheless recognized the historic nation as having a peculiar relationship with God (sura 29: 45). The other side of his ambivalent view of them is shown in sura 9: 29; 3: 108, and in his treatment of the prosperous Jewish colony of the Khaibar Oasis—after defeating them he assessed a crippling levy of 50% of all their livelihood, reducing them to a permanent penury. Mohammed’s treatment of captured Jewish, Christian and other non-Muslim colonies is significant. He protected them from subsequent attack—even by Muslims—but extracted from them heavy taxes, which financed his continuing military expansion. The conquered peoples, “Dhimmis” (members of tolerated religions), were required to work hard for bare subsistence, and their cheap labor became the bedrock of the national

economy, but with considerable hardship and indignity to themselves. While the Koran's teachings under subsequent wise and moderate rulers permitted a bearable life to the Jews, they were open to interpretation by later Islamic zealots, such as the Caliph Omar, as a license to inflict severe oppression. It led others to massacre the Jews.

MOHAMMED'S SUCCESSORS

THE CALIPHATE

Mohammed left little or no instruction for the leadership and administration of the Muslim community. Following his death, at a meeting of the "Companions," Abu Bakr, Mohammed's father-in-law and intimate associate, was chosen as leader of Islam, with the title "Khalifat rasul-Allah" (*Successor to the Messenger of God*); hence the term Caliph. The original, strictly orthodox Caliphate was centered in Medina, and the classical view was that all Islam would have a single ruler of Mohammed's tribe, the Koreish. The titles Sultan and Imam were introduced later and used almost interchangeably with Caliph until the World War, Phase I, placed an unendurable weight on the Caliphate.

In 1914 Turkey entered the war on the side of the Central Powers and sought to use Ottoman influence in Islam by proclaiming a *jihad*, summoning Muslims to fight for the Caliphate. But this aroused little sympathy in non-Ottoman Islam. Divided loyalties distressed Muslims in countries which opposed the Central Powers, exposing the weakness of the Ottoman claim. Turkey's military defeat, with loss of territory and credibility, and the abandonment of Islam under Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, led to the abolishing of the Caliphate by the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 1924. In 1926, despite attempts to revive pan-Islamic leadership, an International Caliphate Conference in Cairo officially declared the office vacant until all Islamic peoples could establish a unified policy.

THE FIRST FOUR CALIPHS

ABU BAKR, OMAR, OTHMAN AND ALI

Abu Bakr (c. 573-634 A.D.), of the Koreish tribe, a "Companion" on the Hegira, was originally a Meccan merchant. After his election as the first Caliph in 632 A.D., a tribal revolt was incited by "false prophets"—an event regarded by orthodox Muslims as the "rida" (*apostasy*). It was energetically suppressed, and isolated communities previously unaffected by Mohammed's teachings were quickly brought into the fold. Within a year Abu Bakr ruled the whole Arabian Peninsula.

In keeping with Mohammed's ambitions for Islamic

expansion, expeditionary forces were sent against Palestine and Iraq, which found the "soft under-belly" of the two great rival empires quite unprepared for such pressures, and met with considerable success. Thus Abu Bakr, loyal to Mohammed and Islam, provided the initial driving energy for sensational later events. Before he died, he nominated as his successor Omar, his long-time associate and adviser, one of the "Companions." A firm ruler, a born administrator and a fanatical Muslim, Omar laid down rules for conquered territories, as under his able leadership Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Mesopotamia and parts of Persia fell to Islam. He adopted the title "Commander of the Faithful." These conquests provided for the Arab armies' upkeep and the enriching of Mecca and Medina. In 644 Omar was assassinated (no reason given) by an Iraqi workman in the Medina Mosque. The aging Othman, one of the first Muslims and Mohammed's son-in-law, was then elevated to the Caliphate.

The armies under Othman's generals maintained pressure on all fronts, while he organized Mediterranean fleets which wrested naval supremacy from the Greeks and led to the occupation of Cyprus. He appears to have been the first to produce an authoritative Koran text, prepared by the "Companions" at Medina. Copies were sent to all the main Moslem-controlled cities. The strain of transition to an empire caused mutinies to flare up in Iraq and Egypt, and he was slain in Medina in 656.

Muslims of Medina, displeased by Othman's "weakness," recognized the redoubtable Ali, cousin of Mohammed by Abu Talib, son-in-law by Fatimah and respected warrior, as the next Caliph. Ayesha, Mohammed's widow, raised armed opposition at Basra, but Ali vigorously suppressed this in 656 A.D. Ali's deeply religious nature, his relationship to Mohammed and his claim to the Caliphate at Mohammed's death secured his place in Islamic history. His policies led to internal strife and division, and loss of support by the Medinan Muslims when he transferred the capital to Kufa in Iraq (this later helped cause the Shiite schism).

Pressures mounted against Ali as Syria gained control of Egypt and attacked in Iraq, while former tribal supporters formed the earliest sect of Islam, the Kharijites (*seceders*), to oppose his policies. In 661 a Kharijite assassinated him at the Kufa mosque. He became the charismatic figure by which Islam was divided, as the Shiah party shortly thereafter rejected the first three Caliphs and adopted Ali as Mohammed's only true and direct successor.

Thus Mohammed's influence was maintained by these four successors. In 30 years they created an Islamic Empire reaching from the Indus River in the East to Tripoli in the West, and from the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus Mountains in the North to the African desert in the South.

The Koran was upheld long before it was written; it was carried orally by trained reciters, with the "Companions" supplying the stamp of orthodoxy. Groups of Arabic zealots were founded in the newly won territories, and rapid conversions were easily made of those not having any prior deep religious convictions. However, Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians held to their beliefs and suffered consequently to a lesser or greater degree, according to the local Islamic governor's attitude.

The effect of elevation from primitive superstition, idolatry and the life of the marauding tribe, to life under the moral, political, social and religious doctrines of Islam, was startling. A strong Arabian challenge provided the necessary ethos for military enterprises, including invasion and territorial annexation.

Later Caliphs were not "Companions" of Mohammed, but "Followers On" (second generation Muslims) or "Followers of the Followers."

THE LATER CALIPHS THE OMAYYAD CALIPHS

The Omayyad house was ancient and aristocratic, connected with the Caliphate through Othman. At Ali's death, Muawiyah, head of the Omayyad house and governor of Syria, assumed power and moved the capital to Damascus. Following Muawiyah, twelve more Omayyad Caliphs reigned, but they did not distinguish themselves in ruling the Muslims. Factional troubles increased. Under Abdul-Malik (685-705 A.D.), some order was enforced on the turbulent empire. The struggle against Byzantium was resumed, and following an earlier but short-lived march to the Atlantic in 681, the Egyptian army moved into Northwest Africa to stay.

The new governor of Tangier, Tarik, invaded Spain with 7,000 N. African Berbers and 5,000 Arabs. He defeated the Visigoth King Roderic and occupied most of the Iberian Peninsula, including Gibraltar (Jabal Tarik). This assault on Europe is often called the Moorish invasion. Europe was threatened as Islamic forces penetrated from Spain into France; but Frankish Kings, especially Charles Martel (the Hammer), at the Battle of Poitiers in 732, stopped their further advance. Thus began the history of Islamic Spain, with its unique culture, which lasted until 1492.

Factional violence again flared in the Islamic territories. Military defeats followed along the northeastern frontiers, and revolts in newly conquered Indian provinces forced withdrawals. Tribal rebellions, turmoil and bloody battles on all sides sapped the energies of Islam. Marwan II, last of the Omayyads, and most of his family, died violently in 750 A.D. Then emerged the Abbasid dynasty (descended from Mohammed's uncle Abbas).

THE ABBASID CALIPHS

Under the Abbasid Caliphs, the capital was moved to Baghdad. The armies, prone to internal warring under the Omayyads, were quickly prepared for duties on various frontiers. The Arab language and religion were maintained throughout the empire for 200 years, after which the Persian tongue became the language of culture. The claim to legitimacy as true heirs of Mohammed was strongly maintained in the face of Shiite opposition, and "Sunna" was the basis upon which Abbasid culture was established.

Under more settled conditions and as frontiers were consolidated by treaties, commerce and industry grew. In Baghdad it was a brilliant period of intellectual development and material luxury, which spread over the whole Muslim world. Cultures as diverse as the Spanish and the Indian were borne about by eager, restless scholars in a cross-fertilization of ideas which did much to highly elevate centers of learning, courts of administration and chambers of discussion.

Europe was at its darkest at this time. The Holy Roman Empire was forged between the Pope and the Frankish King. Europe, not yet recovered from the Barbarian ravages which had engulfed the Western Empire, looked fearfully on the two threatening "claws" of Islam, East and West. Even so, embassies were exchanged between Baghdad and the Emperor Charlemagne, and Christians were given more freedom to visit Jerusalem. The learning which filtered back to Europe set the newly emerging schools there alight with a new intellectualism to blend with their religious dogmas, initiating the slow rise of medieval scholastic learning.

At this point Islamic glory passed its zenith however; old enmities were revived. Local revolts broke out and chiefs gained a measure of independence. Baghdad itself fell into a state of near anarchy. The Shiites gained ground and the Abbasid dynasty staggered. Egypt and Spain fought out their histories almost independently. Palestine became a separate issue as in 1099 Crusaders from Europe took Jerusalem and held

it until the great Islamic leader, Saladin, ended their occupation in 1187. The Mongol invasions in 1220 A.D. under Genghis Khan began their historic devastation in northern and eastern Persia. As Attila the Hun was the “Scourge of God” to Christian Europe, so Genghis Khan was regarded by many as God’s retribution on a careless Islamic generation.

Forty years later Baghdad itself was invaded and sacked by Mongols under Hulagu, grandson of Genghis. The last Caliph of Baghdad, Al-Mustasim, was kicked to death in 1258. About this time the Mamelukes, previously slaves from lands near to the Black Sea, seized power in Egypt and consolidated their reign in time to withstand the southern thrust of the Mongols. Persia was restored to Islam three generations later, not by conquest but by conversion, as the Mongol Ghayan (1295-1304), abandoned Buddhism to become a Muslim.

Mongol pressure from Asia was resumed as the all-conquering Tamerlane (Lame Timur), after conquests in Asia, swept down from Samark to subdue all the Eastern Islamic lands south to Syria. He was a “good Muslim” and favored the mystic Sufi orders in Persia.

Across the great central lands of Asia from the China Sea to the West European approaches and southward to the Timor Sea in the East and to the gates of Egypt in the West, the fervor of Islam had not abated. By missionary zeal in traders and in travelers, it had spread under the religiously tolerant Khans before Tamerlane. Wherever the nine-tailed Mongol standard had been raised, as far afield as Northern China, Indonesia and from there to the Philippine Islands, Islam had won its converts. With Tamerlane came an end to tolerance of missionary activities by Christians and followers of other faiths, leaving Islam with a clear field.

THE OTTOMAN TURKS

The Ottoman Turks, included among Islam’s traditional fighting peoples, invaded and settled in Anatolia (Asia Minor) when Hulagu was establishing the Ilkhanate in Persia. Under Osman I (1259-1326), Ottoman forces invaded and took the territories north and south of the Marmara Sea, which links the Black Sea with the Aegean. Constantinople was taken in 1453. After a millennium of glory and power as a Roman, Christian and Occidental outpost in the East, it became a place of Ottoman, Islamic and Oriental expansion toward the West. A hundred years later, the Ottoman empire reached into the Balkan States from the shores of the Eastern Adriatic, across the Carpathian Mountains to the northern shore of the Black Sea, as a menace to Christian Europe for cen-

turies. Martin Luther in 1529 published a pamphlet “On the War against the Turks,” which urged the Emperor to march against them, and later preached on the Islamic incursions as a fulfilment of prophecies from Ezekiel and Revelation (Gog and Magog) to punish corrupt Christendom.

The Ottoman empire swept around most of the Mediterranean’s coastal lands almost to Gibraltar, then down through Mesopotamia to the Persian Gulf, and by the late 17th century the Hijaz and Yemen where Islam began were added. However, it was during this time that decline set in, because of nepotism, corruption of officials, economic difficulties, factional rebellions and resistance to change by the dynastic rulers. Military defeats followed in the 18th century and in World War, Phase I, which resulted in the dissolution of the empire.

In World War, Phase I, Britain progressed militarily by making a landing at the Dardanelles in 1915 and in an advance up the Euphrates valley in 1916. However, her moves in promoting disaffection among Islamic Arabs proved effective in Southern Palestine, and in 1917 General Allenby marched from Egypt and took Jerusalem while General Maude found success in Mesopotamia.

In the post-war settlement, Turkey, stripped of her empire, fell under Mustapha Kemal Ataturk, who broke up, abandoned or destroyed the old Islamic traditions and abolished the Caliphate. Several Arab states were set up.

THE MOGULS OF INDIA

The early influence of Arab rulers and Muslim missionaries among the Hindus of northwestern India was weakened by quarreling between Sunnite and Shiite Muslims, and by Hindu rebellions. The territories were later plundered by each new wave of Mongols, and Arabian sea commerce was jeopardized by the Portuguese under Albuquerque, in the early 16th century.

Baber, of Tamerlane lineage, swept aside all opposition to set up a “Moghul” (Mongol) Empire over the greater part of India. His grandson Akbar, proclaimed Emperor at 13 in 1556, became the richest, most powerful monarch in the world in spite of a rift between Muslims and the native Hindus.

As Muslim culture was superimposed on the ancient Hindu legacies of literature, art, religion and custom, it was modified into a unique and distinctive form. It remains in India to our day as a legacy of former Islamic glory. Mosques and minarets speak of that time, while the Taj Mahal at Agra remains a monument of man’s ability to express his higher aspirations in stone.

to be continued in the next issue

THE JEWISH QUESTION

“And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” — Luke 21: 24.

continued from last issue...

PREPARATIONS FOR CHRIST'S REIGN

Someone may say, we see the Jews back in Jerusalem after their absence of over eighteen centuries from the time of their disbursement in 70 A. D. and holding on very precariously in the midst of their land-hungry Arab neighbors. Their existence is threatened, not only in Jerusalem but also in Palestine as a whole. What does this prophecy mean? In reply, we ask, What do you think our Lord meant when He said that Jerusalem shall be trampled by the Gentiles until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled? Do you think that the walking over the stones and streets in Jerusalem was what the Lord meant by the treading down of Jerusalem? If so, you were very unwise in your thought. Jerusalem represents the Jewish polity, government, institution, and people. The Jews had already been subjugated for centuries before our Lord's remark—in fact, they were under the heel of the Romans at the time Jesus uttered these words; and they would continue to be under the domination of those Gentile governments “until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

COMFORT MY PEOPLE

Gradually, the Jewish people have been emerging from their subjugated condition, persecuted for over eighteen centuries. The time is here when the Message has been and is still being delivered to them, as recorded in Isaiah 40: 1, 2 “Comfort, yes, comfort My people' says your God. 'Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.” This prophecy was fulfilled, as pointed out in the *SITS, in the year 1878; and ever since that time, the star of Judaism has been rising; the Jews have become more prosperous ever since, as they themselves realize. Nowhere have they been so prosperous as in these United States, where they have received their greatest blessing; while in Russia and Germany they have been severely persecuted and will have a future rush at their national existence which is Scripturally designated as Jacob's Trouble.



*SITS=Studies in the Scriptures

JERUSALEM NO LONGER SUBJUGATED

The treading down of the Jews has lessened. All over the world the Jews are now free—even in Russia. We believe that the treading down of Jerusalem is ceasing, in part, because the time for the Gentiles to hold Israel in subjection has in large measure ended.

Since 1948, the Jews have a recognized and established national government in Palestine. The Turkish government has long ago relinquished its rule. We have been announcing to our Jewish friends that the time of their disfavor and the Times of the Gentiles have expired, thereby bringing to an end the non-Jewish subjection of God's people. Some years ago, we called their attention to the fact that the Gentile Times were fast closing; and the Message, by the way, went all over the various countries of the world where Jews live, it having been printed in the Yiddish and the German languages. That Message has carried peace to them, telling about their restoration and pointing out to them this very time. What a blessing it has been for them to go and take possession of their land prophetically set forth for them as their own. We have been able to tell them that the Gentile Times have expired and the United Nations has granted them a small portion (the size of New Jersey) in Palestine, itself for their home. We do not know how soon they will have full possession of all of Palestine but it will be theirs according to the Divine promise in God's due time.



Israeli Blowing The Shofar

CHURCH EXPECTATIONS

Someone may ask, since the fulfilment of the various time prophecies demonstrates that God's methods of operating seem slow, may it be, that the earthly phase of the Kingdom will not be ushered in for many years yet. Our reply is, we are not a prophet; we merely believe that we have come to the place “where the signs of the times” are indicating that the great Time of Trouble may soon reach a climax and that Jacob's Trouble will follow. If the Lord has some years more for us here, before Restitution commences and the “highway of holiness” opens we shall be

very glad to be able to be here awaiting the inauguration of the New Covenant and Kingdom blessings. We feel sure that all the Lord's truly consecrated children also will be glad to be present in preparation for that event.

Nothing could induce us to part with that knowledge of God and His Plan in which we rejoice today. In all the world, that which makes the Lord's people appear happy is not special beauty on the outside, but the Light on the inside, the Light of the Knowledge of the glory of God, the Light of the Knowledge of the Divine Truth in our hearts. This Light shining through these earthen vessels is heart-cheering and comforting. We cannot imagine anything better. As the poet says,

"It satisfies my longings, as nothing else can do."

We are happy to be co-workers with God; and by and by, we shall be His associates in the Kingdom.

THE LORD'S PROMISES

Look back in time and observe how the Lord's promises have been fulfilled during the time of the Gospel Age Harvest and it has been as the Lord said, a blessed time of refreshment of truth, made known to the faithful watchers who were present and recipients of the message of Daniel's prophecy. Listen to the words of the Prophet concerning the time since 1874 and note how his prophecy has been fulfilled: "Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days"—the blessedness of those who have been living from 1874 onward (Dan. 12: 12).

What blessings have we received? Just as the



Bible has said to us, so has it been. Those who open their hearts to the Lord find that He not only comes in and sups with them, but that He becomes their servant, comforts them, and serves them with "meat in due season" (Matt. 24: 45). This accounts for all these blessed truths upon which

we have been feasting since we have entered into the light of Present Truth. It proves that this Divine Plan of the Ages is not from any human being nor is it a human plan or scheme; for no human being is capable of bringing such glorious things out of the Word of God.

Looking back over the past eighteen hundred years at the futile efforts of able, good men and women to bring something reasonable and harmonious out of the Bible, we find nothing satisfactory. On the contrary, we are ashamed of all the creeds of the past. Even

those made in the past century do not satisfy anybody's longings. Those who are paid to preach them are ashamed to do so, and cover them up as much as possible. Our Lord said that at His Second Coming He would serve things "both new and old"; and this has been so. Not merely are new things coming to our attention respecting the glory of the coming Kingdom and the work throughout the thousand years of Christ's Reign, but old things are coming to us in a clearer, better light. Among these is the doctrine of Justification by Faith, about which Brother Luther preached centuries ago, and which we thought had been correctly defined and thoroughly understood. Now we find that we did not understand Justification by Faith at all. Good people preached Sanctification, too. When we came to a Biblical understanding of the subject of Sanctification, all that we knew before seemed childish and contradictory. How beautiful and harmonious these doctrines became! Then there are the types of Leviticus, which picture all the glorious features of the Divine Plan. All these familiar subjects are now shining as new, having been brought forth by our great Master, who is doing the serving, who is giving "meat in due season," "things both new and old."

Take the doctrine of Baptism, which has been preached about for all these centuries past. Now we are finding out that what we did not know about it has filled volumes. When we come to an understanding of the subject of Baptism, it is beautiful, grand! We never supposed that it had so much meaning. The reason for all this increase of knowledge is that we are living in the blessed time mentioned by the Prophet Daniel, "Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days" (Dan. 12: 11, 12). In other words, as already mentioned, those of God's people who are living now after the expiration of the 1335 symbolic days have been blessed with further revelations of secular and religious Truth (539 A. D. + 1335=1874; * SITS Vol. 3 pp. 82-90). This advance in knowledge has blessed every feature of human endeavor and not merely the religious sphere, so that it continues to affect everyone living today. We exist in the time during which God has been pouring upon our hearts and minds—the most important facet of instruction—the spiritual applications of this joy, peace and blessing mentioned by the Prophet; but it did not happen in one hour, in one day, or in one year. It has been a gradual unfolding of Divine Truth. This beam of Divine Truth shines more and more as we approach the Millennial Kingdom (Proverbs 4: 18).

* SITS= Studies in the Scriptures.

* * *



THE THIRD DAY OR EPOCH

“And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land of the Earth appear; and it was so. And God called the dry land earth; and the gathering together of the waters called He seas. And the evening and the morning were the Third Day.” — Genesis 1: 9, 10.

The beautiful simplicity of this statement might mislead us into thinking that the gathering together of the oceans and the erection of mountains were works of magic. While Divine operations are all great and wonderful, they are usually accomplished by reasonable methods, called the “course of Nature,” and Nature’s course must be marked out by Nature’s God.

The ring theory of Cosmogony is that several rings had precipitated themselves upon the Earth during this Third Epoch-Day and these, according to the Divine intention, so increased the pressure on the crust of the Earth as to cause it to buckle or wrinkle. These depressions became ocean beds, and the upheavals became mountain ranges. Thus was the work of the Third Day accomplished. The waters were gathered into seas and oceans; the dry land was upheaved and began gradually to drain off in preparation for vegetation. This draining must have required a long time.—Genesis 1:9, 10.

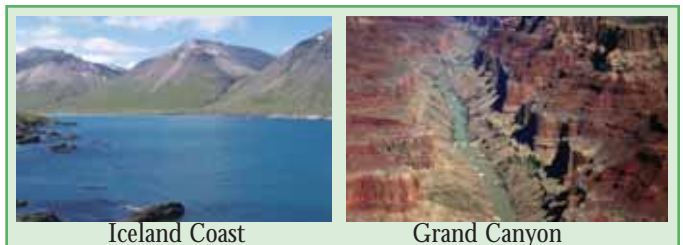
We need not assume that all the continents as we now know them were thrown up on the Third Epoch-Day. In all probability, the American continent was thrown up much later than were Europe, Asia, and Africa. Earthquake disturbances in our day have changed the surface of the land. They give us a reasonable conception of how the Divine command was executed on the Third Day, preparatory to Earth’s vegetation.

Appropriately, we next read, “And the Earth brought forth grass and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit.” That is to say, vegetation *began* on the Third, or Carboniferous Day, though it did not reach its perfection until after the light of the Sun penetrated. There are grasses and other vegetation, which prosper best in darksome shades.

* * *

Questions on Lesson 4

1. What work was accomplished during the third day?
2. Were these works of magic? Par. 2
3. Who marks out nature’s course?
4. Explain the theory of Cosmogony. Par. 3, See Encyclopedia.
5. Were all the continents thrown up at one time? Par. 4
6. Have we any recent physical facts to prove they were not?
7. What causes a change in the surface of the land? Par. 4
8. When did vegetation begin? Gen. 1: 11-12
9. When did it reach its perfection? Why not sooner? Par. 5
10. What is meant by the Carboniferous Day? See Encyclopedia.
11. Do some forms of vegetation thrive in darkness?



The Photo Drama of Creation along with the helpful Study Guide may be purchased separately or as a set. Photo-Drama \$7.50; Study Guide \$5.75 or \$12.00 for the set. The two books would make a nice gift that keeps on giving year after year as one learns more about God’s wonderful plan of salvation. Suitable for study by an individual, a family or in a Bible study class. Use enclosed order form.

“Yea, ‘God saw that it was good.’ The work was well done. The seas keep their places; the continents keep their places. This is good for both of them: good for the inhabitants of the land, for the sailors over the bounding main and for the denizens of the oceans. This work praises the Lord. Yea, all God’s works praise Him; and we, too, praise Him, who alone doeth wonders, whose name is holy and reverend!”—Paul S. L. Johnson, Epiphany Studies in the Scriptures., volume 2 ,page 388. “Creation” — \$2.00

A GLORIOUS PROSPECT FOR MANKIND

I wandered through this vale of tears
 And saw men crouching in their fears.
 'Mid crumbling hopes they were dismayed,
 Bewildered, wond'ring and afraid.
 'Twas then I rose and gazed afar
 Beyond the clouds and farthest star
 To One whose ways are great and grand:
 A thousand works o'er sea and land.
 The flowers that blossom in the light
 To captivate the sense of sight;
 The birds that sing their glad refrain
 As though to stir our trust again.
 And then there loomed a little child,
 Becoming, gentle, meek and mild;
 A trustful smile, a golden ray,
 To turn our darkness into day!

Beholding faith with all its charm,
 Why need to harbor thoughts of harm?
 Much rather enter gates of praise
 And seek life's long unending days.
 And then there came momentous news,
 Revealing grand enchanting views—
 Peace from on high, good will to men:
 Edenic joys to bloom again.
 Then war shall cease, disease and crime,
 Which do not savor endless time:
 For Jesus died that He might bring
 His peace and joy to everything.
 A thousand years to pave the way
 For this eternal gladsome day:
 A thousand years to raise the dead
 And offer them the Living Bread.

Then all the grateful will arise
 To find an end to all their sighs.
 Then they will say with voice and pen
 "God's love surpasses minds of men!"
 With such good news, why be dismayed,
 Bewildered, troubled and afraid?
 With heart and soul let's look above
 And trust in Christ's Redeeming Love!



Letters to the Editor

A Brother and Sister—sent me a copy of the Bible Standard Extra 101—"Satan's Lie" was extremely well explained. Thank you very much.

B. O.
Minnesota

Dear Sir,

Through the assistance of a friend living in the United States, I was able to get the complete set of Bible Keys, Studies in the Scriptures, which volumes I have read with great joy. They have been of tremendous help in my relative understanding of the Scriptures.

I would like to know if you have any books that deal with the phenomenon of dreams especially as it relates to the dead. If the dead are really dead, as I am now con-

vinced they are, why it is that some encounter them in their dreams to the extent that useful information is passed to them. I would be glad if I could be enlightened on this bugging subject. (See Booklet listed below: "Spiritism is Demonism").

Could you please send me a copy of your book titled "Creation" and indicate the way to effect payment from here. These good things should be made within easy reach of people in Africa too.

While I eagerly look forward to your favorable response, I remain, yours faithfully

T. O.
Nigeria

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SERVICES BY VISITING MINISTERS

Ralph Herzig

Ohio Convention, July 20-22;
Minneapolis, MN Convention, September 21-23

Leon Snyder

Ohio Convention, July 20-22; Minneapolis, MN, August 18, 19; Minneapolis, MN Convention, September 21-23

Robert Herzig

Springfield, MA, August 5

John Wojnar

Wrentham, MA, August 26

Thomas Cimbura

Ohio Convention, July 20-22; Chicago, IL, August 4, 5; Minneapolis, MN Convention, September 21-23

Donald Lewis

Barlin, France Convention, July 27-29; Hyde, United Kingdom, Convention, August 3-5; Denver, CO, September 8, 9; Minneapolis, MN Convention, September 21-23

James Shaw

Ohio Convention, July 20-22; Independence, KS, September 9; Minneapolis, MN Convention, September 21-23

John Zilch

Grand Rapids, MI, August 25; Muskegon, MI, August 26; Minneapolis, MN Convention, September 21-23

Robert Steenrod

Ohio Convention, July 20-22; Derry, PA, August 26; Minneapolis, MN Convention, September 21-23

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Lauderdale Lakes, FL, July 8; Iuka, MS, July 18; Ohio Convention, July 20-22; Wilmington, NC, August 8; Raleigh, NC, August 10; Roanoke Rapids, NC, August 11; Norfolk, VA, August 12; Minneapolis, MN Convention, September 21-23

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July 20-22, 2007

Friday, Saturday and Sunday

Ohio University Inn and Conference Center.

331 Richland Avenue, Athens, Ohio, 45701

Telephone: (740) 593-6661. Room rates are \$79.00 plus 12.75% tax. Reservations should be made by July 1, 2007 as the rooms set aside for our group will be released back to the hotel at that time. Be sure to ask for the Laymen's Home Missionary Movement room rates when making your reservation. Check in time is 3:00 p.m. and check out time is 12:00 noon. Some of the local brethren will be available for transportation to and from the Columbus, Ohio International Airport. Contact K. Brown, the class secretary at (740) 969-3717 with the pertinent information such as name of airline, arrival and departure times. There will be a hymn sing in the afternoon after the convention.

Minneapolis Convention

Friday—Sunday, September 21, 22 and 23

Hilton Garden Inn,

1975 Rahncliff Court, Eagan, MN 55122

Make reservations directly with the hotel at (651) 686-4605 or (800) 500-4232. Ask for LHMM Room block. Reservation deadline is August 30, 2007 for the special flat rate of \$85.00 for double occupancy and \$10.00 for each additional person. Children under age 18 stay free with an adult; 24-hour free shuttle service to and from Minneapolis International Airport. Coordinators: P. Lewis (763) 574-1186 and B. Carlson (952) 922-6143

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David Lounsbury

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Roger Mullen

New Haven, CT, August 19

Richard Piquene

Mustang, OK, August 12

Harold Solomon

Denver, CO, July 8; Glen Allen, VA, August 12; Reidsville, NC, August 26; Roanoke Rapids, NC, September 16

William Sturges

Erie, PA, July 1; Chester Springs, PA, August 4, 5

Lawrence Williams

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Michael Williams

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Ukraine: Orlowka, June 29, 30 and July 1; Lwow, August 17-19

United Kingdom: Hyde, August 3-5; Sheffield, October 27 and 28

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