



The

Advocate of Truth



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The Prince Of Peace



"The Prince of Peace" is one of the best known titles which the Bible assigns to Jesus. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). Although this title was not used by the angel who announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds on the Judean hills, the chorus of the heavenly host praising God and saying "peace on earth" has been a continuous reminder of it. We think of peace as the absence of war, and we know that as the result of the rulership of Christ war will be abolished. "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Micah 4:3).

However, as "The Prince of Peace," Jesus will do much more for mankind than abolish war and instruct the people in the way of peace. He will also establish peace between God and men. When our first parents transgressed God's law and were sentenced to death, divine favor was withdrawn from them. Sin and selfishness thereafter ruled in the hearts of men. This led to bitterness and hatred toward one another in families, in communities, within nations, and among nations. This has resulted in bloodshed, murder, and on the national level, war.

Basic to this prevalence of strife among men has been their alienation from God. They have been in rebellion against Him and His laws of righteousness and love. When **God sent His Son to be the Redeemer and Saviour of the world, it was an expression of His good will.** It was an evidence that He was taking the first step toward reestablishing a peaceful relationship between Himself and His errant human creation.

In Romans 5:1, the Apostle Paul uses the expression "peace with God" to describe the relationship that exists between God and those who now, by faith, accept Christ

and become His disciples. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Very few during the present age have risen above their superstitions and their fears, and by faith entered into this blessed relationship of "peace with God." Contradictions and confusion concerning God and His plan of salvation have hindered the vast majority from finding Him, even though they may have sought Him.

This does not mean that God's plan of salvation through Christ has failed. This simply indicates that the time for the enlightenment of many people is not here yet. It will be during the thousand-year reign of Christ that the earth will "be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9). It will be then that the "veil" of superstition pertaining to God will be removed. This will permit the people to understand His requirements and His plan for their eternal happiness. It will be upon the basis of an understanding of and obedience to this plan that Jesus will establish peace between mankind and the Heavenly Father.

Closely associated with the title "Prince of Peace" is the title "Mediator." Paul uses the title "Mediator" in one of his explanations of the redeeming work of Christ. Let us quote I Timothy 2:3-6, **"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."**

A mediator is one who makes peace by assisting those who are estranged to reach an understanding. In that way, Jesus will serve as "The Prince of Peace" in establishing peace between God and men.

Truly, Jesus is the Saviour Who, in giving His humanity for the life of the world, prepared the way for the reconciliation of the people to His Heavenly Father.

Contributed

ABOUT UNBELIEF



Many of us are so accustomed to hearing and reading about our Lord Jesus Christ's lasting and wonderful achievements when He was here on the earth

that we seldom, if ever, hear of the lack of success with which He was confronted. Let us consider one of His less fortunate endeavors.

Our Lord tried most faithfully and repeatedly, but unfortunately for its inhabitants, He was unable to accomplish anything of a worthwhile nature in the city of Nazareth except lay His hands upon a few sick people. The Scripture tells us that He was indignantly rejected by His fellow townspeople. "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Matthew 13:58).

While His neighbors testified of His infinite wisdom and marveled at the depth of His profound understanding, yet straightway they began a radical depreciation of His positive teachings for the following reasons:

He was a carpenter's son, and His mother was called Mary. She was a local woman whom they all knew. They saw His brothers and sisters every day, so they thought that Jesus was no different than they were. How could this local person be any different than His fellow townspeople?

Therefore, they flatly refused to accept His persistent claims to deity. How could He be the Son of God? On one occasion, they forced Him bodily out of the city and tried to throw Him over the edge of a cliff in an effort to get rid of Him. "And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong" (Luke 4:28-29).

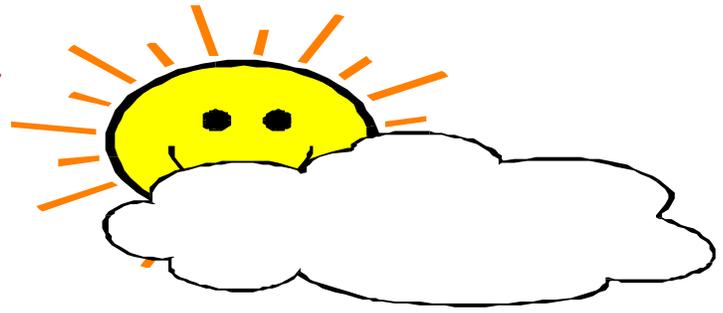
Do you think they would have obeyed His teachings if He had been born in an earthly palace instead of a stable, where the sound of cattle was heard? Had Jesus been the son of an illustrious emperor instead of being a member of the family of a hard working carpenter, would they have accepted His theology? The answer is No. Why not?

They would not have accepted His teachings or His theology because the sin of UNBELIEF had already taken hold of their minds, and had been slowly working itself down into their proud, self-satisfied hearts, so they did not realize that He was not only the Son of Mary, but He was the only begotten Son of God!

Even with all of the one hundred and ninety-six prophecies, including the Virgin Birth, written for them in the Old Testament, telling them such a Person would come, yet they did the very thing which God had warned them against.

They scoffingly denied Christ. They steadfastly refused to accept the Deliverer and Redeemer for whom all Israel should have been looking. Why was this so? It was because of the SIN OF UNBELIEF!

OVERCOMING DARKNESS



A Study Lesson

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

In our opening verse, Christ employs "light" and "darkness" as metaphors for life and death. Metaphorically speaking, the world lies in abject darkness. Into this darkness, our Lord Jesus Christ was sent to bear witness that there is a way that leads to the light. Unguided, the world would never find the way. Our Lord declares that He is both the way and the guide. "...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). "Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (John 12:44-46). Having come from the light, only the Lord Jesus knows the way to it. "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5). Speaking to the Pharisees who had proven themselves to be blind guides, our Lord said, "...I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go" (John 8:14).

During this Gospel age, those who desire to tread the path that leads to the light must believe the words of God as Christ Himself believed them. Our Lord will illuminate every footstep of those who follow Him. Those who believe that Christ's words are the words of God, and commit to all that is implied by that belief, pass from death to life. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

Though it seems paradoxical to the world, those who pass from death unto life obtain mercy in this age because they believe Jesus when He tells them He will lead them to life everlasting if they will follow Him even unto death.

The Apostle Paul explains the wisdom that supports that requirement, "For he that is dead is freed from sin. **Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.** For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:7-11). For the followers of Christ during this present Gospel age, the darkness of death is overcome by dying in Christ, nothing doubting that the resurrection He promises He will fulfill.

During the time of the kingdom, Christ and His glorified saints will assist the inhabitants in overcoming the darkness of death that they may also live. Ignorance, superstitions, and deception will be ended, for Satan will be bound a thousand years. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:1-2).

The Lord Jesus Christ knows every step we take, and He knows every difficulty that we have. He knows every latent danger on the path of our lives. The Lord Jesus is a very necessary presence for all of us. Without Him, our feet would tremble and walk in prohibited places. Without Him, each and every one of us would have turned to our own ways. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6).

Let us recall that Thomas had thought and asked about the way. He had a lot of concern at that time when the Lord Jesus said: "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know" (John 14:4). By the response of Jesus, Thomas felt and knew that everything would be fine. Why? The answer is because Jesus was not and is not just a way, but He is the living way that leads us to the eternal home of God.

JEREMIAH WASN'T A WEAKLING



Let's stop calling Jeremiah a man of tears as if this was his only quality. That label has become a libel, and it in no way reflects the strength of the man's character. Read the record for yourself, and you will discover that Jeremiah's symbol is not a weeping-willow tree but a cedar of Lebanon. He was tender, but he was titanic in his faith.

A random reading of his biography has resulted in a perverted portrait of Jeremiah. In fact, the word Jeremiah has been coined to indicate that which is a mournful dirge or a sorrowful complaint. This conception of the prophet, however, is based not so much on the Book of Jeremiah as it is upon the Book of Lamentations, a eulogy written in a city graveyard.

We recognize that Lamentations contains sorrow and sighing, grief and groans, but we would point out that it comes after the Book of Jeremiah, which contains the heroic story of Jeremiah's forty-year ministry in Jerusalem.

Consider some of the highlights of Jeremiah's life and ministry.

Jeremiah grew up as a sensitive lad in a village near Jerusalem, the capital city of Judah. **Summoned as a young man to the prophetic office, he at first declined, but when he was faced with God's promises, he reluctantly accepted the call.**

During the reign of King Josiah, Jeremiah seems to have stood somewhat apart from the reformation movement initiated by the young king. Perhaps he saw its shallowness and superficiality.

It was in the reign of Jehoiakim, that the prophet first came under outward persecution and oppositon. Jehoiakim had no time for the Lord's prophets, indeed, he caused one of them, Urijah by name, to be put to death for his fearless proclamation of judgment against Jerusalem and Judah.

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim, Jeremiah dictated all his messages to Baruch, his secretary, who in turn read them to the people of Judah. When finally the scroll containing the prophecies was read in the king's presence, he

was furious, burned the scroll, and then ordered his officers to apprehend Baruch and Jeremiah; but they could not, for the Lord hid them.

Jeremiah continued to minister throughout the eleven-year reign of Jehoiakim. Upon Jehoiakim's death, Zedekiah was placed on the throne by the Babylonians. Zedekiah could never make up his mind about Jeremiah. The king wanted to hear from the prophet, but he was never willing to implement what the prophet wanted him to do. Accordingly, Zedekiah limped his way through eleven years of poor rulership.

It was during the final years of Zedekiah's reign, when the city of Jerusalem was being besieged, that persecution broke out anew against Jeremiah, and he was imprisoned on the false charge that he was a traitor to his own people. **The fury of the princes of Judah knew no bounds, and on one occasion they threw the prophet into a well.**

But God helped Jeremiah, and through the goodness of a foreigner, Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, he was rescued and protected.

After the fall of Jerusalem, Jeremiah was given full freedom by the Babylonians to choose to go on an all-expense-paid trip to Babylon or to remain with the small remnant in the land, and that decision involved him in all the sad experiences of the remnant. At wit's-end-corner, on account of the assassination of the Babylonian-appointed governor Gedaliah and fearful of reprisals by the Babylonians, the remnant went to Egypt in disobedience of God's Word, taking Jeremiah along with them in spite of the prophet's protestations.

According to tradition, Jeremiah was finally slain by the wilful remnant.

What kind of a man, then, was Jeremiah? Certainly no sissy, no coward, no weakling. And yet is not this the picture so many have of the man? To many, he was effeminate, one who could do nothing but shed tears over the fate of his country. Let us not be guilty of continuing to depict the prophet as a weakling. That calumny should be withdrawn, and withdrawn now.

From *The Prairie Overcomer*

I AM THE WAY

By Moises Torres Martinez

In a discourse to His disciples in the upper room, the Lord Jesus Christ said: "...I go to prepare a place for you...that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3). Thomas stated a problem and said: "...Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" (verse 5). As an answer, the Lord said: "...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (verse 6).

The Way: "By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh"(Hebrews 10:20).

The Truth: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

The Life: "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

The Door: "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (John 10:9).

Brothers, the religious men from the past frequently

talked about the way. We see this concept very often in several books of the sacred Scriptures, especially in the Old Testament and in the Psalms. For example, Psalm 27:11 says: "Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies." Psalm 25:4-5 says: "Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day."

There is a thought that life is painted as a journey, and man as a pilgrim walks in the path of eternal destiny. Let us remember that the Lord Jesus Christ identifies Himself as the way to the eternal place of God.

Brothers, the Lord Jesus Christ is not a signal, much less an indicator on the way, but He is the way and our guide.

Our Lord Jesus Christ does not merely point out the way because HE IS THE NEW AND LIVING WAY to the presence of God. Please read Hebrews 10:20 again. "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Ephesians 2:18).

The Lord Jesus Christ not only tells us how to get there, but He shows us where to walk. The Lord Jesus Christ never commands anyone to walk on prohibited trails. He invites each and every one of us to walk in His footsteps.



The “Man of Sin”

By David DeLong

“**N**ow we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter

as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and

exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (II Thessalonians 2:1-12.)

The brethren in the church of Thessalonica were apparently on the verge of being deceived. They were wondering, it seems, if Christ had already made His second-coming appearance. The deception was from three possible sources: "by spirit" ("by a spirit"--NASB), "by word", or "by letter" (as if written by Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy.) Paul expressly tells them, "Let no man deceive you by any means..."

An order of events must take place first before "the day of Christ is at hand" ("now present"--margin.) That order appears to be: the working of "the mystery of iniquity", even in Paul's day (vs. 7); the restraining of that iniquity (vss. 6,7); a "falling away" (presumably of professed believers from the church, vs. 3); the taking away of the restraint (vss. 6,7); the revealing of the "man of sin" (vss. 8-10); the sending by God of "strong delusion" to those who "believed not the truth" (vss. 10-12); the coming of the Lord and the destruction of the "man of sin" (vs. 8.) Paul reminds the Thessalonians in verse 5 that he had already told them "these things."

A number of clues are given us about this "man of sin." He "sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." The Bible refers to several temples of God. Among them are: "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven" (Revelation 15:5); the New Testament Church (Ephesians 2:19-22); and the physical temple that was, or will be, in Jerusalem (Matthew 24:1; Revelation 11:1,2). Which one, if any, of these temples

will the "man of sin" be sitting in? For obvious reasons, he will not be in God's temple in heaven. Nor does it seem likely that he will manifest himself from within the true church. Jesus said that His followers would be few (Matthew 7:14; 20:16). Therefore, the Lord's church will probably not attract enough attention to be used as the institution through which he gains his world-wide exposure. Besides, the true church would immediately cut itself off from this imposter, having nothing to do with him, if he did try to take control of God's spiritual temple. Therefore, the "man of sin," it seems, will sit "in the temple of God" which will be in Jerusalem.

As the "man of sin" sits in God's temple, he will very likely command worship from the inhabitants of the world by "shewing himself that he is God." This, of course, would be blasphemy. Our Lord Jesus, though not guilty of blasphemy, was accused of this sin by the Jews for declaring Himself to be "the Son of God" (see John 10:33-36). Jesus was also wrongfully accused of blasphemy for forgiving sins. We read about this in Matthew 9:2,3: "And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth." Our Lord has the authority to forgive sins as we well know. However, besides God and Jesus, it would be blasphemy for any person to claim this authority. It is possible that the "man of sin" will claim to have the authority to forgive sins by also claiming to be God.

This individual's "coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders..." The Greek word used here for "power" is "dunamis," and refers specifically to miraculous power. Therefore, the "man of sin" will probably be able to work false miracles by the power of Satan. The Greek word in this passage for "wonders" is "teras," and can refer to an omen. An omen, according to Webster's Dictionary, is "an occurrence or phenomenon believed to portend a future event." Divination may be used in this process. "Lying wonders," then, may involve the deceitful prediction of things to come. In any event, vast multitudes of people will be led astray by this "son of perdition." He, very likely, will be a part of the great apostasy or "falling away" that the Apostle Paul warned about. Jesus, Himself, gives a serious warning in Matthew 24. Verses 4 and 24 read: "And Jesus answered

and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you...For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”

In II Thessalonians 2:6 we read: “And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.” Who “withholdeth” (or “restrains”--margin) in this passage? In verse 7, the last part, we find: “...only he who now letteth (“hindereth”--margin) will let, until he be taken out of the way.” This, I believe, can only be the Lord working through His Holy Spirit to “restrain” or “hinder” the “mystery of iniquity” and the “man of sin.” Apparently, after the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way, the “man of sin” will be revealed. But when will “he be taken out of the way”? This is a hard question to answer. If (or when) the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way, the timing would likely be around the second-coming of Jesus. This coming of Jesus, though, will be in two parts: the “reaping phase” for the saints (first resurrection), and the “warring phase” just before He sets up His kingdom on the earth. Do we find evidence from the Scriptures that suggests that the Holy Spirit will not be restraining sin between the “reaping phase” and the “warring phase”? Let’s see.

If (or when) the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way, the timing would likely be around the second-coming of Jesus.

The prayers of God’s saints, through the working of the Holy Spirit, are used by the Lord to also restrain sin and Satan. Two places in the book of Revelation, chapters 8 and 15, seem to suggest that prayers will not be offered to God during the seven plagues. In chapter 8, verses 1-6, we find that seven angels are about to blow on trumpets to herald the plagues which are sent to earth. Another angel, who holds a censer, offers incense “with the prayers of all saints” before God. In verse 5, this “angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth...” Does this act by the angel symbol-

ize the abrupt ending of the saints’ prayers (along with the influence of the Holy Spirit) and the full impending wrath of God upon the earth? In chapter 15, we are again given a scene of seven angels having seven plagues about to be poured out onto the earth. In verse 8 we read: “And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.” In referring to the earthly temple, Jesus said, “...It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer...” (Matthew 21:13). Is the heavenly temple off limits to men during the seven plagues so that no prayers will be offered then? It would seem so.

Even perhaps more compelling is the fact that during the seven plagues men will not repent of their sins. Listen to this horrifying account in Revelation 9:20,21: “And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.” Could this be because there is no Holy Spirit available to convict the men of their sins? The testimony of Scripture seems to indicate that the Holy Spirit, either with the absence of men’s prayers, or as the Power to help cause men to repent of their sins, will not be present during the plagues. If this is the case, then could the “man of sin” be revealed during this time period?

And yet, it is possible that the Holy Spirit will be taken out of the way even prior to the plagues. Maybe it will be at the first resurrection, when the saints, having the Spirit in their bodies, will be “...caught up...to meet the Lord in the air...” (See I Thessalonians 4:17).

In Daniel, chapter 11, we get an overview of historical and prophetic events from Daniel’s day down to the time of the end, near the first resurrection. Verses 2-4 tell us about events relating to the kingdoms of Persia and Greece. Verses 5-40 relate important happenings that take us down to “the time of the end,” and even, very possibly, to the “man of sin.” Let’s read verse 40. “And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him (“man of sin”?): and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.” In verse 41, this individual

enters into the “glorious land” which probably indicates Israel. Verse 43 suggests that he will be rich. We read in verse 44, “But tidings out of the east (China?) and out of the north (Russia?) shall trouble him...” Verse 45 is very interesting. “And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.” This person will likely set up his headquarters “between the seas in the glorious holy mountain.” This is probably a reference to Jerusalem which is situated between the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, and is called Mount Zion (see Psalm 48:1,2).

How do we know that when this individual sets up “the tabernacles of his palace” in Jerusalem, that it is near the time of the first resurrection? Daniel 12:1,2 tell us so. “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered,

The prophet Daniel tells of “a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time...” At that time, his people will be delivered—if they “shall be found written in the book” (Book of Life?) It appears from these verses that the first resurrection will be the deliverance for them. Jesus makes a seemingly similar statement in Matthew 24. First, He warns of “the abomination of desolation” to be set up. Then, He speaks of a “great tribulation” to come, followed by the first res-

urrection. Let’s read about this. Verses 15,21,22,29-31 say: “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)...For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened...Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

The “abomination of desolation” from Daniel that Jesus speaks of is apparently a desecration of the temple in Jerusalem because it is done in “the holy place.” There are at least four desolations of God’s temple that are mentioned in the book of Daniel. Chapter 8:11-14 is about the desecration done by Antiochus Epiphanes. Chapter 9:26,27 are difficult verses to completely understand. However, the reference in verse 26 to “the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary” seems to fit the Roman Titus and his army in 70 A.D. Chapter 11:31, also a difficult verse to understand, could also be a reference to Titus. Chapter 12:11,12 are extremely interesting verses. They read: “And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.” Could the blessing associated with the 1335 days be the first resurrection? Could it be the deliverance for Daniel’s people from the “time of trouble” and the gathering together of God’s elect after the “great tribulation?” If so, then the “abomination of desolation” that Jesus referred to could be from this passage in Daniel 12:11, and the abomination itself may be the “man of sin” who “as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” Let us not wait, however, for the “man of sin” to be set up to get ready for the Lord’s return. By then, it may be too late.

In Revelation chapter 13, verses 1 and 2, concerning the Apostle John, we read: "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." This "beast" that the Apostle John saw rising out of the sea, seems to be a composite beast made up of the four beasts that the prophet Daniel saw in his vision (see Daniel 7:1-7). Those four beasts were: like a lion, like a bear, like a leopard, and a "dreadful and terrible" beast. That the beast John saw had seven heads and ten horns can probably be taken from the total heads and horns that were on the four beasts in the book of Daniel. (The lion had one head; the bear had one head; the leopard had four heads; and the "dreadful" beast had one head and ten horns.) Upon the horns were ten crowns.

The identity of the beast in Revelation 13 can also be partially adduced from the identities of the four beasts in Daniel 7. (The lion was Babylon; the bear was Medo-Persia; the leopard was Greece; and the "dreadful" beast was Rome.) Therefore, the beast in Revelation 13 would probably be a composite kingdom derived from the four kingdoms in Daniel 7. We are told, too, that this beast had "upon his heads the name of blasphemy" and that "the dragon (Satan, see Revelation 12:9) gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority."

Revelation 13:4,8 tell us that the unsaved people of the earth worship this beast. This is a form of blasphemy in itself. But notice that the beast, in verse 6, does some blaspheming of his own. We read: "And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven." This beast seems to represent both a kingdom and a person (notice that a "mouth" was given to him, and that he made war with the saints, vs.5,7). His time of dominance was 42 months. When we look back to II Thessalonians 2:4, we recall these words about the "man of sin": "...so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." This is blasphemy. Could these two individuals be the same person?

Let's read further: "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power

of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." (Verses 11-14).

Whereas the first beast came up out of the sea (probably representing multitudes of people, see Revelation 17:15), the second beast comes up out of the earth (representing a place with a scarcity of people?)

This beast could also represent both a kingdom and a person because of the various actions which he does. He had two horns like a lamb, suggesting religious purity, since a lamb was a clean, sacrificial animal. However, he spoke like a dragon, suggesting possibly his fall from purity, or his hypocritical, demonic nature. He exercises "the power of the first beast," causes the earth's people "to worship the first beast," and does "great wonders."

“he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,” and does miracles “in the sight of the beast,” even having the people of the earth “make an image to the beast...”

Notice that "he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men," and does miracles "in the sight of the beast," even having the people of the earth "make an image to the beast..." He somehow gives life unto this image so that it can speak and cause those who will not worship this image to be killed (see verse 15). The Greek word for wonders in verse 13 is "semeion" and means "an indication, especially...supernaturally: miracle, sign, token, wonder." Some have suggested that this fire coming down from heaven on earth will be a

nuclear bomb explosion. However, this would be a natural event, not a supernatural one. It seems more likely that this second beast will try to imitate miracles such as the Lord did through the prophet Elijah (see I Kings 18: 30-39; II Kings 1:9-12).

In fact, this second beast appears to be the “false prophet” that Revelation mentions, who accompanies the beast (see Revelation 16:13; 19:20; 20:10). Ponder the words that John pens in Revelation 16:13,14: “And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” According to these verses, both the beast and the false prophet work miracles through Satanic means. This is another indication that the beast and the “man of sin” (“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders...” II Thessalonians 2:9,10) may be the same individual.

Revelation 13:16-18 warns of a mark that the unsaved people receive “in their right hand, or in their foreheads” before they can buy or sell. Anyone receiving this mark will be irrevocably doomed (see Revelation 14:9,10). Some have suggested that the mark will be a physical one. Others have suggested that it will be a spiritual one by giving allegiance to the beast in deeds (right hand), or thoughts and intents (foreheads). Possibly it will entail both. In any case, it must, at all cost, be avoided.

Let us now turn to Revelation chapter 17. In verses 1 and 2 we learn about “...the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” In verse 3, we read of a woman that John saw “sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.” The great whore and the woman rider of the beast are, of course, the same being. We will discuss her later.

The beast that the woman rides may possibly be the first beast referred to in Revelation chapter 13 since it has seven heads and ten horns and is identified with blasphemy. An additional bit of information about the beast in chapter 17 says that it was scarlet in color. Thus, it may appear that this “scarlet coloured beast” is actually Sa-

tan, himself, since Revelation 12:3 refers to him as a “great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns...” (see Revelation 12:3,4,7-9). In chapter 17, this scarlet beast also “shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition” (see vs. 8), a destiny that will happen to Satan (see 20:1-3,7-10).

Yet, other clues may lead some to believe that this scarlet beast is, as suggested before, the first beast of Revelation 13. For instance, we read in chapter 17:9, “And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.” The city of Rome has traditionally been known as a city on seven hills, as history informs us. The beast in chapter 13, as we recall, was an apparent composite beast of Daniel’s four beasts. The last of Daniel’s beasts represented the kingdom (or empire) of Rome. Therefore, the scarlet beast in Revelation chapter 17 could well represent a kingdom associated with Rome, especially since its seven heads represent seven mountains.

And yet, this beast seems to also represent an individual. Notice in chapter 17:12 that the ten horns on the beast are ten kings which will “receive power as kings one hour with the beast.” Now notice verse 14: “These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” When we look at chapter 19, we see a similar scene. Verse 19, reads: “And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him (Jesus) that sat on the horse, and against his army.” Then, verse 20 informs us: “And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.”

Revelation 20:10 tells us of Satan’s similar judgment. It reads: “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” This does not mean that they will be in an eternal hell. Notice that it will be for an undetermined time period, since it involves “day and night.” In eternity, at least in the new Jerusalem, there will be no night (see Revelation 21:25).

We have seen that the beast in Revelation 13 and

chapters 17 and 19 all could refer to a governmental system, as well as to an individual, the “man of sin.” But who is the woman rider of the beast in chapter 17? Verses 4 and 5 tell us: “And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” This woman is rich and has a golden cup “full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication...” She is identified with Babylon, and sits “upon many waters...” (see vs. 1). Verse 2 informs us “...the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” The “MYSTERY” in her name may be identified with the “mystery of iniquity” that we read about in II Thessalonians 2:7.

We need to go to the Book of Jeremiah to see the basis for some of the imagery that John uses for this woman. In chapter 51 verse 7 we find: “Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD’S hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad.” We read in verse 13: “O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness.”

What was the “wine” in this “cup” that “made all the earth drunken?” When we turn to Proverbs 9:1,2,4,5, we find: “Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table... Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.” In this passage we may discern that drinking of Wisdom’s wine is symbolically receiving wisdom or understanding, itself. However, to the carnal mind of man, the drinking of wine symbolically may refer to a perverted type of wisdom. Speaking of the wicked, Proverbs 4:17 reads: “For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.” Even the woman rider has “wine of her fornication.” (Spiritual fornication is unfaithfulness to the Lord by serving other persons or things, such as idols. See Ezekiel 16.) Therefore, Babylon was dispersing to the nations a perverted form of wisdom or doctrine that was making them drunk, and ultimately mad.

History informs us that Babylon had a priesthood which

held absolute sway over its followers by using a confessional to obtain personal information about them. This priesthood claimed to have the sole authority of interpreting its doctrines for the laity. Thus was a false, despotic religious system spread from Babylon throughout the world. It included the practice of astrology, and involved sun worship. The pagan influence on Sunday observance, Christmas, Easter, and Halloween can still be seen today in religious circles. Nimrod, a type of the “man of sin,” was one of the originators of this idolatrous and blasphemous religious system. And, just as there was apostasy among the Israelites in accepting Baal worship, there will also be apostasy among the world’s inhabitants in the worship of the beast.

Now, returning to Revelation 17, we can get a clearer picture of the woman rider of the beast. Verse 18 is very specific: “And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” This woman is a city upon seven mountains, she rides a beast which is identified with the kingdom of Rome, she is the inheritor of ancient Babylon’s abominable pagan practices, she has spread these false doctrines to earth’s inhabitants from her golden cup, and she even reigns “over the kings of the earth.”

AND, God will utterly destroy her! In chapter 18: 1, we read of a powerful angel coming down from heaven. Verse 2 tells us: “And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” God’s people are solemnly warned in verse 4: “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (see Jeremiah 51:6).

In conclusion, the Scriptures appear to inform us of a “man of sin” (the beast), who is aided in the unsaved world’s worship through the false prophet (second beast of Revelation 13. Again, see Revelation 19:20). This “man of sin” may transfer his idolatrous, pagan religious system from Rome to Jerusalem, setting himself up as the “abomination of desolation” by sitting “in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” He, and the false prophet, will deceive those whose names are not in the Book of Life, but Christ will destroy them (Daniel 11:45; II Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 19:20). Let’s pray and study these things.



THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit to this segment, please send them to The Church of God Publishing House, PO Box 328, Salem, WV 26426-0328.

AN ANCIENT APPROACH TO MODERN PROBLEMS

Rosicrucians reveal a message of more tolerance, inner peace and spirituality

By Patrick May
Knight Ridder Tribune News

San Jose, Calif.- Things don't look so hot from where Ian Niderost is sitting.

From atop telephone poles, the SBC line man ponders the fate of the world--and his own.

"I think about worldly matters and politics and environment degradation, all kinds of far-out things, trying to figure out the meaning of life all day long" Niderost, 28, said. "It feels like...we need to start fixing things."

And not just phone lines.

So Niderost and 50 other meaning-of-lifers found themselves drawn one recent night to a shadowy temple on a dark street in San Jose, Calif. It was an informational "salon" sponsored by the Rosicrucian Order, "an organization surrounded in mystery since ancient times," according to its literature, that was launching a unique membership campaign, "marking a rare foray into the public eye for an organization that has been shrouded in secrecy for over 6,000 years."

Seems the Rosicrucians--a metaphysically oriented

group inspired by the esoteric teachings of the ancient mystery schools of Egypt--share many of the concerns of guys like Niderost.

"The state of the world is pretty worrisome right now," said Julie Scott, grand master of the order and the woman at the lectern the other night, her face uplifted in an eerie glow. "So we're unveiling our existence, letting people know what we're about. It's not a doomsday thing, but it's time to let people know we need to get our priorities straight."

In a nutshell: more tolerance, more inner peace, more spirituality.

Judging by the salon goers' body language, that message touches a nerve these days, especially in an area of the country conflicted between a materialistic surfeit and the very real threat of losing it all at the next downsizing.

In a nutshell: more tolerance, more inner peace, more spirituality.

"People in Silicon Valley are so insecure in their lives," said Carol Somer, sitting near Niderost in the dark. "You make a lot of money one week, your company gets acquired the next, and you're out of a job. We can't travel to Indonesia anymore or Paris with the riots or New Or-

leans with the hurricane. No place feels safe."

But for an hour the other night, the temple felt pretty close. Somer and others learned a lot about the order--that it's supported by dues and donations; that it's not considered a religion, but a community where ancient mystical teachings are passed down, often in secrecy.

They discovered that there are about a quarter-million Rosicrucians worldwide. And that through study courses and rituals, the members explore self-helping, consciousness raising and the relationships among all living things.

As Scott put it in her lecture, Rosicrucians strive "to awake the physic sense through symbolism, ritual, sacred space and meditation."

The salon, an unprecedented attempt by the order to spread its message to the general public, was part seminar, part encounter session. Midway through her talk, presented in the softly lit temple that lent an air of mystery to the event, Scott led the audience in a round of chanting and a meditative experiment to summon the collective energy in the room.

Tapping into what Scott called "the magic that lies just below the surface of everyday experience," the Rosicrucians may be on to something, Somer said after the lecture.

"I'm looking for a way to bring peace to the world, and politics doesn't seem to be the answer," said the marketing consultant. "Since the Rosicrucians are a worldwide group and seem to be well-funded, maybe they can lead us to world peace. Who knows?"

"What I want now is to learn as much as I can before I die," she said. "I want to be in a place where I can choose:

Among those who want to know is Martha del Rio. The 60 year old actress drove down from Berkeley, a mere 46 mile jaunt in a lifelong quest for spiritual growth that has filled several pages of her passport. Much of it, in retrospect, was wasteful rambling, she said. Now the clock

is ticking, and reincarnation calls.

"What I want now is to learn as much as I can before I die," she said. "I want to be in a place where I can choose: do I come back to Earth? Or do I first evolve more, rather than just be in a fog and keep coming back and making the same mistakes?"

David Goldfarb took a less rigorous path to reach the ancient order-his mom told him about it.

The 18-year-old high school student is taking a senior English ethics class and "I had a project about ways to rediscover and stimulate the soul. My mom said there was this Rosicrucian Museum, and that the people there seemed to be in touch with the soul. I had no idea what to expect, but I was pleasantly surprised."

He liked the fact there were no dogma pitches that make some church meetings feel like used-car lots. "I'm not into any one religion," Goldfarb said, "and they had some really interesting ideas about the universal truths, tolerance for other's beliefs, and how everything is tied together. They study how to live in harmony with nature, self-healing and the energy of the soul. It's a good way to live."

And it sure beats complete nuclear annihilation, which Scott said "is a risk we're facing like never before."

COMMENT

Tolerance, inner peace and spirituality can only be found in our Lord Jesus Christ. His teachings have been made known in every part of the world, and they are salvation to those who follow Him and do His commandments.

The meaning of life is found in Him. The Rosicrucians or any other group that has been, or still is surrounded in mystery, cannot make this claim!



Questions and Answers

Question: How can a person believe in the miracles in the Bible as science has proven that miracles don't happen?

Answer: You are not correct, not only has science never "proven that miracles don't happen," but such would be impossible since science deals only with natural phenomena. Miracles don't happen naturally or in nature. By definition, a miracle is supernatural. It defies all physical laws or it would not be a miracle in the first place. A miracle must be beyond the ability of science to explain. Therefore, it is beyond the ability of science to disprove.

Question: Did Cain find another race in the land of Nod?

Answer: The Scriptures inform us that the first two offspring of Adam and Eve were Cain and Abel. It would be impossible for another race of people to be living in the land of Nod.

Question: What is the work of the four beasts and the twenty four elders of Revelation 4?

Answer: In this chapter, we have recorded a description by John of the Throne in Heaven: "...a throne was set in

heaven, and one sat on the throne" (verse 2). The four beasts and twenty four elders there were created by God, "...and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (verse 11).

The purpose of these creatures is to continually glorify the Lord in heaven: "...and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come" (Revelation 4:8).

Question: Why should we believe the Scriptures?

Answer: Some people answer this question by saying that the reason is found in the fact that the Bible is the only book handed down to us through the ages. That is not the best answer! Some ancient writings, like the Vedas, for instance, are almost as ancient as the Bible. And many tablets and monuments are in existence containing words written as long ago as the writings of the Scriptures.

There are many powerful arguments for the Bible, but the greatest is that every person who will really study it finds that it does tell the truth about the human state. When a man reads in an arithmetic book that two and two make four, he does not stop to ask himself why he should believe the arithmetic. He knows instinctively and intuitively that the arithmetic is telling him the truth.

So when an honest man studies the Bible, he finds it full of truths about himself. The Bible tells him that he is a sinner, and he knows that is true. The Bible tells him about God, and he finds in his heart a deep conviction that just such a God exists. The Bible offers forgiveness, and the man knows that he needs it.

Step by step, and point by point, the Bible shows the man what he is and what he needs and points the way to finding the fulfillment of his needs and desires. People find in the Bible help for bearing their trials, power to resist temptation, assurance of eternal life and friendship with God.

Question: Will you please explain I Timothy 4:1-4, especially concerning marriage?

Answer: Let us quote these verses: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving."

In these verses, the Apostle Paul is foretelling of the coming wickedness which will be caused by those who depart from the one true faith which was delivered unto the saints. These things were yet to take place because the early church was still firm in the doctrines of Christ, and some of the original apostles were still living at that time.

The Apostle Paul was aware that there would be a falling away from the true Gospel. He made mention of it in his second Thessalonian letter. Please read II Thessalonians 2:3. As we look about us today, we can see Paul's words are very real. From time to time, false ministers came along and said that they had a vision that told the members not to get married.

Each prediction has been fulfilled. There are church organizations which have the doctrine which forbids marriage of their church leaders. The church at Rome maintains that their priests must remain celibate. This is a doc-

trine which is not found in the Scriptures. The false doctrine to abstain from meats is another teaching embraced by some religious organizations which is not biblically supported. Paul says in the same context of verses that those meats which have been sanctified by the Word of God and prayer (verse 5) are fit for human consumption. This directly refers to the law of the clean and unclean meats.

The things mentioned by Paul in these verses reveals unto us what can happen to a person when he falls away from the true faith in Christ. These things have been witnessed by the people of God down through the centuries since the time of Paul. Even in recent years such developments have taken place in the church to which some can testify. It is the very reason why there are others today who will lay claim to the name "Church of God." However, their doctrines are of those who have departed from the faith. Therefore, as children of God, we need to give heed to Paul's words, and let them be a warning unto ourselves that we are not led astray. As leaders and ambassadors for our Lord Jesus, we must remain more sober and vigilant as we see the coming of that great day of Jesus Christ.

Question: Was the man without the wedding garment harshly dealt with?

Answer: No, he was not. He was treated as he deserved. At a wedding feast in an Oriental land such as Christ was describing, the king would provide garments for his guests, suitable to the occasion. A guest who declined to wear the wedding garment and went in wearing his ordinary attire, would be conspicuous and his conduct would be an affront to the king. He would naturally be considered as despising the dress which the king had provided and preferred his own. Christ, in the passage in Matthew 22:11-13, was warning His hearers against trusting in their own righteousness and rejecting God's way of salvation.

Question: What is Pantheism?

Answer: It is the belief that nothing exists except God. Therefore, God is in everything!



India

The following photos are of the Lord's Supper service conducted in India. Elder M. Yehoshuva is presiding. These were taken this year.





LESSON I

PETER'S LOVE FOR JESUS

Scripture Reading: John 21:1-19.

Golden Text: John 21:17 (last part).

"And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep."

1. Who was gathered together at the sea of Tiberias, or Galilee, as recorded in John 21:2?
2. What did Peter say he was going to do, and what happened? John 21:3.
3. Who stood on the shore the next morning? John 21:4. Did the disciples know who this was? Remember Jesus had been crucified prior to this time.
4. What did Jesus say to the disciples? John 21:5-6. What was the result when the disciples followed the command of Jesus?
5. Who first recognized Jesus? John 21:7. What did Peter do when he heard it was the Lord?
6. When Simon Peter brought the fish to shore that they had caught, how many fish were there, and what was the condition of the net? John 21:11.
7. How many times did this make that Jesus had showed Himself to His disciples after He was risen from the dead? John 21:14.
8. What question did Jesus ask Peter? John 21:15. What was the reply, and what did Jesus then say?
9. What did Peter answer the second and third time Jesus asked him this question? John 21:16-17.

LESSON II

PETER PREACHES IN JERUSALEM

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:1-42.

Golden Text: Acts 2:38.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

1. Where did Jesus say the disciples should remain and, why? Acts 1:4-5; 2:1.
 2. What happened as the disciples were gathered in one place and in one accord? Acts 2:2-4.
- NOTE: Tongues means languages.
3. What was the action of the men gathered together? Acts 2:5-7.
 4. What words were being heard by all present? Acts 2:11.
 5. What was said of the disciples, and who became their spokesman? Acts 2:13-14.
 6. Name at least three statements Peter made in His message. Acts 2:15-36.
 7. After Peter gave his message, what did the people ask him, and what was his reply? Acts 2:37-38.
 8. What did those who believed Peter's words do? Acts 2:41. How many people were added to the church that day?

LESSON III

A LAME MAN IS HEALED

Scripture Reading: Acts 3:1-20.

Golden Text: Acts 3:6.

"Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none;

but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk."

1. Where do we find Peter and John in Acts 3:1?
 2. What do we know about the lame man? Acts 3:2.
 3. What did Peter reply when the lame man asked him for alms? Acts 3:3-6. What are alms?
 4. What happened to the lame man after Peter took him by the hand? Acts 3:7-8.
- NOTE: How do you think the lame man felt? By what Power was this deed done?
5. Who did the lame man give credit to for his healing? Acts 3:9.
 6. What was the reaction of the people who saw this miracle? Acts 3:10.
 7. Who gathered at the porch of Solomon? Acts 3:11. Peter took this opportunity to preach to the people about Jesus.
 8. What did Peter say was responsible for the lame man's ability to walk? Acts 3:16.
 9. What did Peter say in Acts 3:19? Define the words "repent" and "converted."

LESSON IV

PREACHING FORBIDDEN

Scripture Reading: Acts 4:1-22.

Golden Text: Acts 4:12.

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

1. Who was not happy that Peter and John were teach-

ing the people about Jesus? Acts 4:1-3.

2. How many that heard the words of Peter and John believed? Acts 4:4.
3. What did the rulers of Israel and the high priest ask Peter and John? Acts 4:7.
4. What answer was given to the rulers? Acts 4:10. Peter and John did not take credit for the miracle they performed. The glory was given to Jesus where it belonged.
5. What is said of the Lord Jesus Christ? Acts 4:12.
6. What did the rulers say about Peter and John? Acts 4:13.
7. What did the rulers decide among themselves? Acts 4:16-17. Why do you think the rulers were afraid for Peter and John to continue to preach the Word of God?
8. What reply did Peter and John give when they were commanded not to speak nor teach in the name of Jesus? Acts 4:19-20.
9. What did the rulers then do to Peter and John? Why? Acts 4:21.





FOUR PENNIES FOR JESUS

Diana was on her way to Sabbath School, feeling very happy. She wore the new red coat she had received for her birthday. In her new red purse was a bright, shiny silver dollar. It was her birthday offering for Sabbath School. Diana had saved the pennies herself and that very morning her father had given her the dollar in exchange for them.

Each member of her class gave a birthday offering every year. The offerings were "Thank You" to Jesus for all the blessings they had received from Him throughout the year.

Diana had more to be thankful for than many of her classmates. Her heart was singing a little song as she skipped along thinking how glad she was to give Him the offering she had saved.

As she went by the fruit shop Diana saw a girl staring into the window with delicious fruit. The girl was pale and thin, and her head was bare. Diana felt very sorry for her shivering there in the cold. As she passed by, the girl turned from the window. There were tears in her eyes.

Diana stopped. "What are you crying for?" she asked gently. The girl only shook her head and began to sob. "Please tell me, I want to help you," Diana urged.

Finally the girl stopped crying and held out her hand. In it were four brown pennies. "They're all I have," she said sadly, "and tomorrow is Mother's birthday--and she's sick. I wanted to buy some grapes. Mother said she be-

lieved she could get well if she had some grapes, but these few pennies won't buy any," she added looking at the pennies with tears in her eyes.

Diana looked at the girl, then at the clusters of luscious grapes in the window. She thought of the shining piece of money in her red purse. It surely would buy a big cluster of those delicious grapes for the girl's mother. But it was her birthday offering. Diana hesitated, but only for a moment. Then quickly she opened her red purse, and taking out the money, pressed it into the child's hand. "Here," she said, "you can get a beautiful big bunch for this. Now tonight after the Sabbath you can come to the store and get them."

The girl looked at Diana through tears. "You're very good," she said. "I'll take your money if you'll take mine," she added, and she thrust the four pennies into Diana's hand.

Diana ran down the street toward the church. When she got there she began to feel ashamed of the four little brown pennies that were all she had to give. "It's too little for a birthday offering," she said to herself. The more she thought of it, the worse she felt. By the time she reached her class, Diana was about to cry. She had given away her "Thank You" to Jesus--and she had only four pennies for Him. He would think she did not love Him.

She stood outside the door for a long time. She was standing there when Miss Field, her teacher opened the door and saw her.

"Why Diana, what is the matter?" she asked.

Slowly, Diana raised a puzzled face to Miss Field. Then she told of meeting the girl in front of the fruit shop.

"I wanted the sick lady to have the grapes and now I have only the four pennies to give Him for all the blessings He has given me last year." Diana said.

"Why, dear child!" said Miss Field. "You gave Him the gift He loves best of all. Do you remember where it says in His Book, 'inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me'? I think you made Jesus very happy by what you did."

Diana studied a moment, then a bright smile chased away her tears.

"Oh, Miss Field, I never thought of that. I'm so glad I gave her my 'Thank You' money!"



The Test

By David DeLong

I studied hard the night before,
The exam was comprehensive;
If I didn't gain a decent score--
Well, I was apprehensive.

A tutor came down to my room,
And asked if he could help me;
His cheeriness dispelled my gloom,
And his service all was free.

I took advantage of his aid,
As he taught me how to pass;
I felt assured I'd make the grade,
Then, smiled in the looking-glass.

Many a person is trying hard
To somehow pass the test of life;
They cannot use a cheater's card,
It cuts them like a knife.

They're worried about that final day,
When they face a fearsome tomb;
And dread the debt they have to pay,
As they stand on the edge of doom.

But, Jesus, Son of God Most High,
Stands ready to enter our room;
He's anxious to hear our heart's cry,
And let our life burst into bloom.

He'll teach us how to pass the test,
He'll also erase each flaw;
Then, in the mirror, we'll look our best,
Of the looking-glass of God's law.