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COVER: As God's Spring Holy Days draw near, we need to make sure we thoroughly understand God's great plan as pictured in those Holy Days. We need to help our children understand God's plan as well! See page 2. Photo by Greg S. Smith and Roland Rees.

Letters

"Personal" on tithing

Your "Personal" in the latest issue [December] reminded me of what has happened to us in the last six months. I've been a member since 1975 and God has blessed me with the sweetest husband. He isn't a member but he has paid tithes off and on since I started to church. Anyway, he got a great job offer in June and kept putting off paying tithes.

We had this leak that he couldn't fix in the roof no matter what he did. After a while he began paying his tithes again and, wouldn't you know, we haven't had any more trouble with leaks.

Small things really mean a lot when you stop and think about them.

Mrs. Steven Upton
Jacksonville, Fla.

"Pray More Effectively"

Keep up the good work. The other day I read the article in the *Good News* [December] telling us how to pray effectively, straight from the heart.

Seems like that article was written just for me. I really saw myself in that article — just like looking in the mirror. I am getting myself cleaned up. I am learning to pray effectively. This is the first time I have really enjoyed praying. I had a nice talk with my Father. . . .

My life is going to take on new meaning. I know it's not going to always be easy, but I am determined to make it.

Clemotean Forrest
Tylertown, Miss.

Index appreciated

Just a note of thanks for the 1981 index of the *Good News* and *Plain Truth* in the December issue of the *Good News*. In the past I have thought about making my own personal index of the *Good News* and *Plain Truth*, but didn't know where to start. I know this index will be of great value to all of us.

Raymond Alexander
Albertville, Ala.

"Meaty articles"

Thank you for the really meaty articles we are receiving in the *Good News*, all designed to help us get straightened out and face up to our responsibilities, appreciating the great calling we have been offered. I am grateful that God has been and is so merciful to us all, and pray we all will fight hard enough to be counted worthy by God.

June Hepworth
West Yorkshire, England

What Is the Purpose of the Resurrection?

Why is a resurrection necessary if man has an immortal soul? If we are saved by the death of Christ, why did Jesus have to be resurrected?

By Herbert W. Armstrong

TODAY WE live in a time of world revolution. We hear talk about the END OF THE WORLD!

Today we face a DUAL question! Not only regarding *man*, but now also concerning CIVILIZATION. WE need to find the answer to the question put by the patriarch Job: "If a man die, *shall he live again?*" (Job 14:14).

This should be a time of HOPE, because even if THIS WORLD dies — and it shall — there will follow a RESURRECTION of a new and *better* world — a world at PEACE — a world of contentment, happiness, abundance, JOY!

Now, as never before, we need to realize that the eternal GOD is working out a purpose here below — and that His great PLAN involves a DUAL resurrection: the resurrection of *the individual*, and also the resurrection of a dying WORLD! *Very few*, indeed, have any conception at all of the NATURE of the resurrection!

Never a time like this before

YOU live today in a time *different* — utterly *different* — from any past time on earth! YOU are destined, as no past generation has been, to live in two worlds! Yes, *this* world is dying — that's the real *meaning* of world chaos today — but there will be a RESURRECTION. And, *catch this!* — the resurrected body is *not* the SAME body that previously dies!

Why did God Almighty NEED to

provide for any resurrection at all? What's the PURPOSE of the resurrection? What does it MEAN?

Most people have somehow come to believe that Christ *completed* God's plan of redemption on the cross — by His death!

But if salvation was made full and complete by Jesus' DEATH, then why is there any need of — why do people celebrate — the RESURRECTION from the dead?

You often hear people say, "Christ *died* to save sinners." Many suppose that's a Bible quotation — but it isn't. Many firmly believe that Christ's DEATH imparts to us ETERNAL LIFE, that it is the BLOOD of Christ — His *death* — that actually SAVES — that imparts everlasting LIFE! Many of *you* will be surprised to learn that the Bible says NO SUCH THING! What a self-contradictory, totally unscientific thing the Bible would be stating, if you could find that in the Bible!

There is no more basic and firmly established law known to science than the law of biogenesis — that only LIFE can beget life! DEATH has no power to impart LIFE! Life cannot spring from dead matter. The *living* does not come from the NOT-living! GOD ALMIGHTY *created* that law!

WHY, then, was it necessary that Christ DIE for us — that He shed His blood? Let's understand!

Death cannot impart life

The Scriptures reveal that ALL have sinned and the PENALTY for sin is DEATH (Rom. 3:23, 6:23)! The PUNISHMENT is *death* — yes, death

for all eternity — ETERNAL PUNISHMENT!

The BIBLE definition of SIN is the transgression of God's LAW — the immutable, inexorable SPIRITUAL law of LOVE summed up by the Ten Commandments (I John 3:4). God established that law, actually *set it in motion*, to MAKE MEN HAPPY. It's THE WAY to peace, to prosperity, joy! It's the *perfect* WAY OF LIFE. It's the way to ENJOY life to the full!

This world is filled with strife and war, fear and worry, poverty and want, discontent and SUFFERING *only* because men have TRANSGRESSED that holy, spiritual LAW!

God's salvation does not impart *merely* eternal life! Salvation means FAR more than that! Jesus said He came that we might have eternal life, yes. But He also said something MORE: "I am come," He said, "that they might have LIFE, *and that they might have it more* ABUNDANTLY" (John 10:10).

God help us to comprehend! Not merely continuous existence — but the full, happy, interesting, ABUNDANT life! Yes — and *that* for ALL ETERNITY!

Why God hides Himself

Just stop and think a moment! For God to impart mere never-ending EXISTENCE, which we should live in ever-increasing emptiness, boredom, misery and suffering — why, that would be the most *cruel* punishment! GOD IS LOVE (I John 4:8)! He wants YOU to learn the way to ENJOY life —

(Continued on page 27)

God's Spring Holy Days will soon be upon us! By the time you read this, Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread will be, at most, only a few weeks away. To God's true people, this season and all of God's Holy Days are deeply meaningful.

But how much meaning do they have for our children, those young ones whose teaching God says is our responsibility?

Do we ourselves deeply understand God's Holy Days? And, most important, do we set the proper example in observing these days? Do we take them seriously? Unless we do, how can we effectively express to our children the significance of God's master plan?

Ancient Israel's example

The ancient Israelites, in slavery in Egypt, certainly were forced to take God's plan seriously when God began to work with them.

Times of national crisis — war, economic depression, enslavement of one nation to another — are probably harder on children than on any other single group within a nation. Without a doubt this was true during ancient Israel's hard bondage in Egypt.

Imagine the plight of Israel's children during the months and weeks leading up to the Exodus:

Slavery no doubt broke up families. The people lived in extreme poverty. The Israelite children were not afforded good opportunities for education.

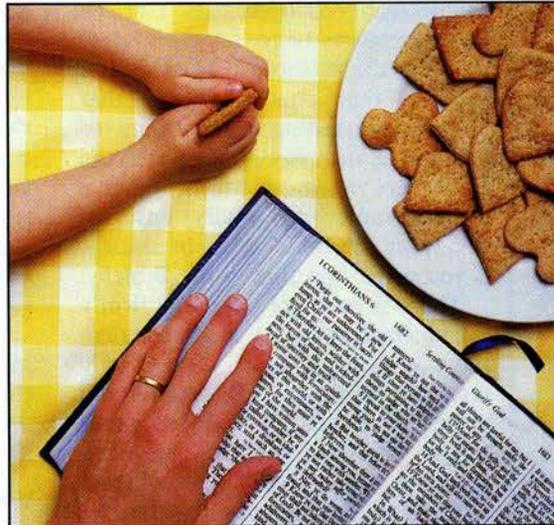
The hard labor, from which even the children were not excepted, must have claimed a heavy toll in terms of the children's physical and mental health. Nothing — not even human life — could stand in the way of the massive building projects Pharaoh pushed so obsessively.

Then God intervened. Keeping His promise to the patriarch Abraham (Gen. 15:13-14), God began to deliver Israel. Moses arrived on the scene and God, through miraculous and devastating plagues, drove Pharaoh to release God's nation. We know the story.

'Daddy, Why Do We Eat Unleavened Bread?'

By Dexter H. Faulkner

To teach our children about God's plan, we need to first understand God's Holy Days ourselves.



But think of the Israelites' children. While the grown-ups were no doubt bewildered by the course of events, the children must have been most confused — even fearful.

Israel followed God's instructions and prepared for the very first Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread

(Ex. 12:1-25). God struck down the firstborn in every Egyptian home and Moses began to lead Israel out of Egypt. These events would only have added to the children's wonderment.

But God is not the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33). He wanted His people — every person, down to the youngest child who could understand — to know about His plan. So He provided a means for the children to learn about the events and ceremonies of these first Holy Days: Parents were to teach their children, then and for every generation thereafter.

Notice Exodus 12:26-27: "And it shall come to pass," God told Israel, "when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses."

God placed a heavy responsibility on parents. They were to teach their children about the things of God, including God's Holy Days, which show the plan of salvation.

One of the most effective ways for them to have done so was to have set the proper example of obedience in their own lives. Personal example goes much farther than words in setting a pattern of right living.

The Bible shows, however, the adult Israelites themselves failed to heed God's commands, let alone teach the younger generations. Therefore, God allowed every Israelite past the age of 20, except Joshua and Caleb, to die in the wilderness rather than enter the promised land.

And Moses, before Israel crossed the Jordan River into Canaan, had to repeat for the younger people, in Deuteronomy, things their parents had failed to teach them. Sad to say, this younger generation also failed to teach their offspring about the ways of God, and the record of Israel's unhappy history shows the result.

Our children are holy

What does this example from Israel's history mean to us today?

Consider our children. Don't they also live in difficult, confusing times — one of the worst times in the history of the world?

Don't the pressures, temptations and enigmas of life in this world exact a high price in terms of our children's physical, emotional and — yes — spiritual health?

Aren't our children in a situation similar to the one the children of ancient Israel were in? We parents are coming out of sin (spiritual Egypt), and our children may be confused.

If we are truly called, begotten children of God's Family, our children are specially blessed by God (I Cor. 7:14). God wants them to know about His plan and His way of life, and God has provided a means by which they can learn.

That means is us! We are to teach them. And one of the most basic ways to explain God's plan is by explaining God's Holy Days, beginning with these Spring Holy Days just ahead of us now.

Notice the admonition God gave through Moses to Israel's younger generations, when Moses reiterated God's law to them: "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up [in other words, all the time!]" (Deut. 6:6-7).

The Israelites, without God's Spirit, failed to teach their children — failed to fulfill any of the instructions God gave them.

We, if we have truly repented, been baptized and had one of God's true ministers lay hands on us, have received God's Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

That makes our children holy. They can understand God's truth if we will teach it to them.

Are we doing so? Are we taking time throughout the year, and especially as we approach these spring festivals, to teach our children?

Children to be taught

Moses continued, in his instructions to the Israelites about to enter Canaan: "And you shall teach them

[God's commandments and God's plan] to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise" (Deut. 11:19, Revised Standard Version).

These instructions apply just as readily to us today, for we, God's called-out people in this end time, are spiritual Israelites.

And teaching our children is not just a matter of speaking to them. As the verses quoted above show, teaching our children is a responsibility we are to be fulfilling constantly. As mentioned before, much if not most of our teaching is through the example we set.

We can, in short, talk to our children all we want, but in the final analysis they will be influenced far more by what they see us do than by what they hear us say. Properly teaching children is, indeed, a tough responsibility. Children really pick up on our cues.

Even if we don't have children, we have the same responsibility to teach. Teach whom? The people in the world around us — by example, if not by direct preaching. We are to be "lights to the world" (Matt. 5:14). Christ said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (verse 16).

Are our children — and people in the world around us — receiving positive impressions of God's plan by the way they see us act?

How can we promote our children's understanding of God's Holy Days?

We should rehearse the history of the Exodus with our children, helping them imagine what it was like to be a child in Israel at that time. This will make the story more interesting to them.

We can explain what these days mean now, in New Testament times — their meaning is much more profound today, to Christians.

We can review the facts about sacrifice and what it means to us now, and what it will ultimately mean to our children and to the whole world.

We can describe what we do on the Passover evening, when we go to ser-

vices but our children can't come along, and tell them what the various symbols — the bread, the wine, the foot-washing service, the singing of the hymn — mean.

Perhaps we could involve the children in baking unleavened bread this year. If the children help to make unleavened bread, this symbol will have more meaning to them — and to us! — than if we buy all the bread from a store.

We should involve our children in cleaning the house and premises, all the while explaining to them why we are cleaning — to symbolize that we must put every last bit of leaven, the type of sin, out of our lives.

Personal review

The Holy Days depict God's great master plan, to which we have devoted our very eternity! Shouldn't we have a thorough grasp of these festivals?

Mr. Armstrong's booklet, *Pagan Holidays — or God's Holy Days — Which?*, offers, in detail, the background to the Holy Days in general and explains each one in particular.

Mr. Armstrong proves, from God's Word, that we are required to keep the festivals today (could we do so, if a skeptic asked us?), shows what each festival meant in both the Old and New Testaments and makes clear the meaning of the symbols associated with each Holy Day. The booklet also offers a handy Holy Day calendar for the next several years.

It would be a good idea to get out this important booklet and review it before the coming festivals of God. Rereading the information will make it fresh in our minds, and we will be better able to communicate it to our children.

(If you don't have the booklet, you may send for a *free* copy by using the literature request card in this issue or by writing to the *Good News* office nearest you.)

Let's determine to deeply understand and appreciate God's Holy Days this year, beginning with the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread, occurring shortly.

And let's help our children learn about, enjoy and revere God's Holy Days by teaching our children as God commands us! □

How You Can Overcome SIN'S DEADLY POW

Sin is a living, dynamic force in human nature! It is actually a law — a law as real and certain as the law of gravity.

The apostle Paul was very much aware of sin's power when he wrote about the "law of sin which is in my members" (Rom. 7:23).

The apostle John also understood the nature of sin, and wrote, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).

If we fail to comprehend this little-understood truth about sin, we will continue to lose in our daily battles with it.

We tend to think of sin as simply an *act* of disobedience, and fail to recognize that sin is a law or cancerous *condition* that reigns in our bodies. Outward acts of sin are only symptoms of the greater disease within. We must lay the ax to the root of the tree if we are to achieve total victory.

If sin exists in our very nature, is there any lasting hope of conquering it? Yes! Paul exhorted, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" (Rom. 6:12).

Paul further declared, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

We cannot conquer sin on our own, but God will provide the power we need. But first, before we can successfully reckon with sin, we must see sin for what it is.

Sin has power

You know you shouldn't sin, but you find yourself succumbing to sin's lures and temptations time and again.

"But how can this be?" you may ask. Perhaps you are baptized, and think: When I was baptized I thought I was cleansed of my sins and that they would never emerge again. Yet I am still plagued with the lusts and temptations of my former life.

If you ask yourself this question, then you do not fully understand the nature of sin.

It is true that when you were baptized, the slate was wiped clean. You were justified before God and all your past sins were forgiven. But baptism did not remove the energy and power of sin that remained in your nature. As we shall see, it is this lingering power of sin within us that we must deal with and overcome.

You need to understand how sin works as a dynamic power within your nature — and how to overcome it! A number of analogies from nature demonstrate how sin works.

For example, we know how one spot of decay on an apple will eventually cause the entire fruit to rot. Rust in a few spots on a car, if not repaired, will in time destroy the value of the entire automobile. Similarly, one cancer cell, if not contained, will spread through the body till vital organs are reached, bringing death.

That's power! And sin, unless controlled and conquered, has the same power to destroy us — for eternity.

Perhaps the most graphic analogy in all creation of how sin works is that of leaven. Leaven starts small — just a pinch of yeast will leaven an entire loaf of bread (Gal. 5:9). But, because leaven is a living organism, it soon grows and spreads through all the dough, actually changing and assimilating to its own nature the original dough with which it is mixed.

Sin, too, starts small — with our first wrong thought. If we allow this thought to linger in our mind, it will grow into a strong temptation or

desire. Then, if we give the temptation or desire enough time, it will become uncontrollable and overpower our will to resist. Left weak and defenseless, we will succumb to the temptation and sin.

James 1:13-15 explains this process in a simple but powerful way: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

But sin doesn't stop there. With each succeeding act of sin that we commit, the sin will pick up momentum and strength, eventually searing our conscience. The sinful act will then become an enthralling, pleasurable habit. This will lead to self-will, hardness of heart and outright rebellion against God.

Once the sin is firmly established, it will open the way for other sins to enter. And eventually our whole heart, mind and being will become corrupted.

The end result of sin, then, is total disintegration of righteous character so that we cannot and will not repent — the unpardonable sin:

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:4-6).

Sin, then, like leaven or yeast, has the power to permeate our entire being. Is it any wonder, then, that God builds the second of His seven

ER!

By Richard Rice

Does sin have a stranglehold on you? Are you struggling against its grip, but losing more battles than you are winning?

annual festivals, which show His plan of redemption for mankind, around this analogy of leaven? The Days of Unleavened Bread picture our responsibility to completely eliminate sin — spiritual leaven — from our lives (I Cor. 5:7-8).

After our sins have been forgiven through repentance and application of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, pictured by the Passover, the first festival, we must strive to overcome this power of sin that still influences our nature. This requires us to remain in a constant state of repenting, because we will stumble and sin again on occasion — we must daily ask God to again apply Christ's sacrifice to atone for our sins.

Satan the devil also plays a role in perpetuating this destructive power of sin. After all, he is the author and instigator of sin — the actual living force behind it — the one who gives sin its life and energy. Satan broadcasts the thoughts, attitudes, lusts and temptations that arouse within us the desires to break God's laws. Satan works in the disobedient (Eph. 2:2).

Thus we are confronted with a two-fold battle — that of abstaining "from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (I Pet. 2:11) and that of resisting Satan the devil (I Pet. 5:8-9).

The key to overcoming

We are born into a world filled with temptations and sin. We become subject to a carnal nature before we even know it. We often refer to this as human nature — or it could be defined as the power of sin.

But now we come to a vital distinction. After repentance and baptism, even though we still have a carnal nature that works in our members, we also have received another nature — a new, spiritual nature from God. Notice how Pastor General Herbert

W. Armstrong explains this significant truth in his booklet, *What do you mean — The Unpardonable Sin?* (interested readers may write for a free copy of this booklet):

"God's Holy Spirit within you is the presence of a new nature — a different nature — you are now a partaker of the divine nature (II Pet. 1:4). The nature that not only wants to be good — but wants to do righteousness. But, mark this well! The reception of God's divine nature within us did not remove the old human nature, with its pulls and temptations. Nor will the human nature be completely removed until the resurrection, and change into spirit composition — until you are no longer composed of matter, but of spirit."

Clearly, we now have two natures coexisting side by side, but these two natures are diametrically opposed to each other: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17, see also Rom. 6:11-22).

The battle of the Christian life, then, revolves around the struggle between these two natures. Many Christians stumble, become discouraged with their lack of spiritual progress and fall. Not fully realizing that sin is a power that is energized within them by Satan, they easily fall prey to their own lusts and Satan's devices.

The key to winning the battle over sin is simple: We must feed our spiritual nature and starve the sinful one. And we are not left to battle by ourselves!

We have an advocate with God — Jesus Christ the righteous (I John 2:1) — who intervenes for us. Jesus sits at God's right hand in heaven to plead our cause and to pour out mercy and forgiveness — we have access

to God's throne and God's help (Heb. 4:15-16). But God is also dwelling in us by the Holy Spirit, and that is our hope of victory and glory (Gal. 2:20, Col. 1:27).

We overcome, by the blood of the Lamb, Satan's evil accusations (Rev. 12:11), becoming free from sin. And we are enabled to walk blameless before God with increasing spiritual strength and power by the very life of Jesus in us, which saves us (Rom. 5:10).

The process of overcoming sin, then, involves rejecting the things of Satan and growing in the nature of Christ.

Feed the spiritual nature

Just as our physical body needs daily food to sustain energy, strength and health, so it is with our spiritual life. We need spiritual food to derive the strength to fight our foes.

Here are some practical steps that will provide us with a concentrated diet of spiritual food:

- **Bible study.** Jesus Christ said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). Our purpose in Bible study should be to so saturate our minds with God's thoughts that we will instantly be ready to combat Satan, the world and our own flesh.

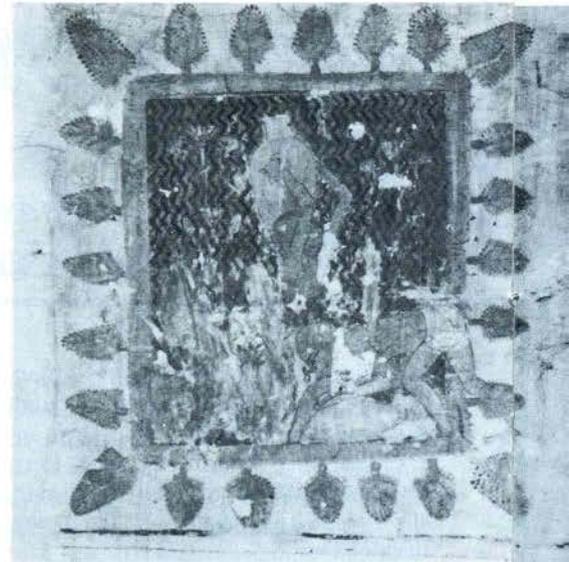
By filling our hearts and minds with the Word of God, we will reinforce our ability to resist the forces of evil and to strive steadily toward God's Kingdom. We are to be literally washed by the Word of God (Eph. 5:26).

- **Prayer.** We must be in a constant state of prayer. Paul told the Romans to continue "instant [constantly diligent] in prayer" (Rom. 12:12). In order for God's strength and life to flow into us, it's imperative that we

(Continued on page 29)

As Passover Approaches...

A New Look at Slavery in Ancient Egypt



Travel back in time for a remarkable look at slavery in ancient Egypt. And then discover to whom you are in bondage now!

By Keith W. Stump

What was it like to be a slave in ancient Egypt?

Life is so different today, with no slavery — you think. But what you may not realize is that the whole world is in slavery today — but of an entirely different sort!

Let me explain.

Flying over Goshen

Come with me, for a moment, to the ancient land of the pharaohs.

I was sent to the Middle East last summer to observe the political and military situations there for *The Plain Truth* magazine. And, secondarily, to study the archaeological records of ancient Egypt as they relate to Bible history.

My early morning flight from Amman, capital of Jordan, to the Egyptian capital of Cairo ran into unexpected difficulty.

Thick cloud cover above Cairo — unusual in summer months, but present nevertheless — prevented three attempts by the captain to land the large Alia (Royal Jordanian Airlines) jet at Cairo Airport. The decision was made, reluctantly, to head north to the Mediterranean island of Cyprus and to sit it out

there until conditions cleared above Cairo.

This unexpected diversion afforded an opportunity that otherwise would not have been available: a chance to see, from the air when the cloud cover lifted, the very ground on which the ancient Israelites had labored as slaves of the Egyptians.

The hour-long southward flight from Cyprus to Cairo passed directly over Egypt's Nile Delta. The Delta is the fertile, triangle-shaped region at the mouth of the Nile, where that mighty river — the world's longest — empties into the Mediterranean Sea.

As I viewed the magnificent expanse of the Nile Delta from the window, I thought back to the time, some 3,500 years ago, when the Delta — specifically the eastern portion, called Goshen (see map) — was home for the 12 tribes of Israel.

On the very ground passing swiftly below me the children of Israel anciently suffered Egyptian bondage.

What were their lives like?

Pyramidal society

What was it like to be a slave in ancient Egypt? As we approach the Passover season, this question is not only of deep spiritual significance,

but timely, with Egypt so much in the news.

The daily life of ancient Egypt is profusely illustrated on colorful tomb paintings, inscriptions on monuments and papyrus records. These sources from the past give us a remarkable insight into the day-to-day life of Egyptians at all levels of society. I had the opportunity, while in Egypt, to examine many of these records firsthand.

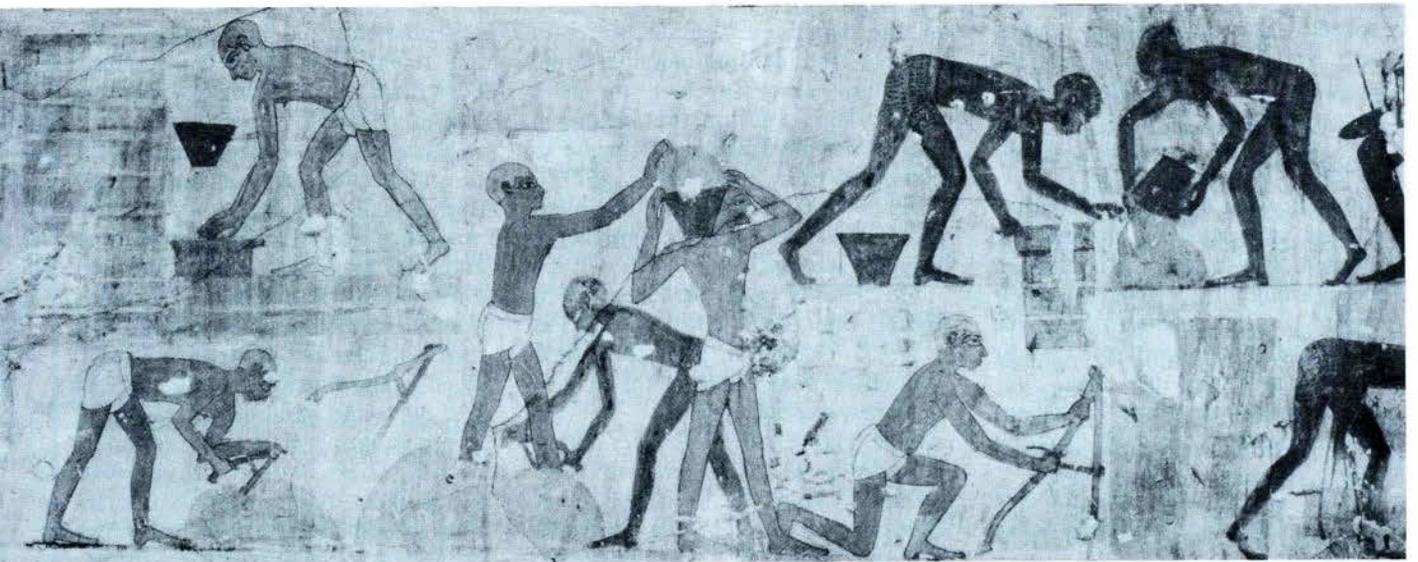
The social organization of the ancient Egyptians can be likened in structure to a pyramid — the very symbol of Egypt itself. At the top of the pyramid sat pharaoh and the royal family. Immediately below pharaoh stood the nobility. Included in this category were top administrative officials, priests, senior scribes, lawyers, doctors and generals.

Next came the craftsmen and artisans. They were responsible for building and decorating the country's temples, palaces and tombs.

Then came the lower classes, including the unskilled laborers and peasants. Peasants worked in the fields, reaping and sowing and tending flocks and herds.

At the base of the Egyptian social pyramid were the slaves.

In most civilizations of the ancient



Near East, slaves were usually acquired from foreign lands as fruits of military conquest.

In the aftermath of war, it was simply more profitable to keep enemy captives in servitude than to kill them.

In the Egyptian Museum in Cairo and at sites throughout Egypt, I saw ancient paintings and stone carvings picturing these wretched masses impressed into slavery by the Egyptians. Among them were Nubians, Libyans, Hittites, Philistines, Syrians and many other defeated foreign peoples.

With Egypt's dramatic territorial expansion in the New Kingdom period (16th century B.C. onward), foreign captives began flowing into Egypt in greater numbers than ever before in Egypt's history.

The pharaohs' lust for building also grew during this time, creating an ever-increasing demand for construction workers. Tomb paintings illustrating the use of forced labor proliferated in number during this period.

Captives from Canaan

The conquering Pharaoh Thutmose III of Dynasty 18 is a good illustration. Thutmose ruled during the first half of the 15th century B.C.

Carved on the walls of the great Temple of Amon at Karnak (ancient Thebes, modern Luxor in Egypt) are detailed annals of his Asiatic military campaigns. I walked through this

awesome structure and saw for myself these time-worn inscriptions.

Among the records is an account, in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics, of his capturing the Canaanite city of Megiddo. One sentence reads: "List of what was carried off afterward by the king: . . . 1,796 male and female slaves, as well as their children."

Every year Thutmose III's war galleys, returning from annual military campaigns such as the one to Megiddo, brought captive Asiatics back to Egypt. Picture the scene: Bound one to another in long lines, the captives descended the gangplank to begin a

Egyptian mural (ca. 1450 B.C.) shows Asiatic captives making bricks as the Israelites were forced to do during their bondage in Egypt. Photography by the Egyptian Exhibition, the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

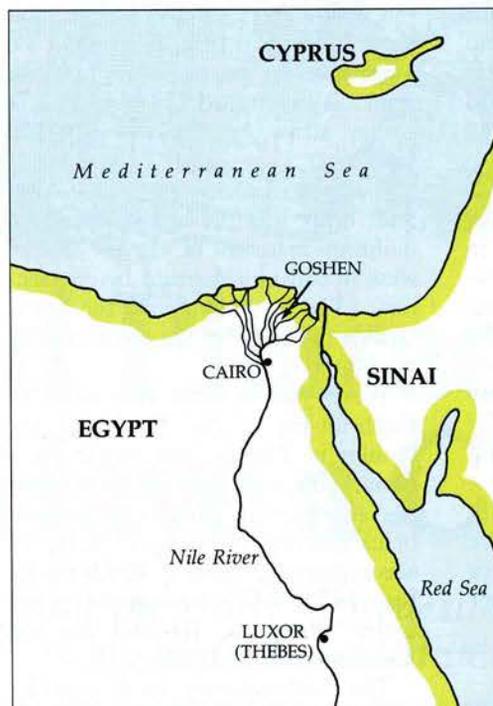
new life of slave labor in a strange land. Egyptologist J.H. Breasted describes the spectacle:

"Their arms were pinioned behind them at the elbows or crossed over their heads and lashed together; or, again, their hands were thrust through odd pointed ovals of wood, which served as handcuffs. The women carried their children in a fold of the mantle over their shoulders. With their strange speech and uncouth postures the poor wretches were the subject of jibe and merriment on the part of the multitude" (*A History of Egypt*, 1905).

On the walls of Madinet Habu temple in ancient Thebes, I saw another, even more grim, description of the fate of war captives. In it, Rameses III of Dynasty 20 described the fate of his enemies.

Men who were not "overthrown in their blood and made into heaps," Rameses boasted, were captured and then "branded and made into slaves stamped with my name, their women and children treated likewise."

Stop for a moment and imagine yourself in their shoes — bound, branded,



mocked by the crowds, facing a hopeless future. That was the fate of the vast majority of slaves anywhere in ancient times.

Arduous work

In theory, all captives of pharaoh were his property. But in practice, captured slaves were distributed widely throughout the land and their types of service varied greatly. The one common denominator: Their lives were no longer their own.

What would your fate have been had you been a slave in ancient Egypt?

Some slaves were given to the priests for forced service in the pagan temples.

Other slaves were impressed into the Egyptian army or into naval service as oarsmen. Still others — usually large numbers — were assigned as laborers to royal building projects and various public works.

The more fortunate slaves served as domestics in noble households. Female slaves often became serving girls and nannies to the children of the upper classes.

But in the main, slavery for the majority was an unchanging round of arduous labor. And, at its worst, slavery could be literally intolerable.

Scenes of slave beating can be seen in many tomb paintings. Cruel and brutal treatment was often the result of foremen — usually recruited from among the enslaved peoples themselves — driving slaves to the limit to avoid the wrath of the Egyptian taskmasters over them.

The ancient Greeks recorded that some of the worst conditions for slaves in Egypt were to be found in the state quarrying and mining operations, such as the gold and copper mines of Nubia, the Sudan and the Sinai. According to the Greeks, men in these mines daily dropped dead by the scores in the torrid heat, under the merciless lashes of foremen and overseers.

Female slaves were not exempt from cruel treatment. They were often prostituted against their will, or made to become concubines of their Egyptian masters.

Bricks without straw

In all of Egyptian history, possibly no enslavement was as severe as that

of the Israelites. Originally 75 in number, the children of Israel came voluntarily into Egypt in the 18th century B.C., during the famine in the days when Joseph was second in command over Egypt (Gen. 41-47). They were freemen, and inhabited fertile Goshen in Lower (northern) Egypt (Gen. 45:10).

But later a new pharaoh arose in Egypt, who “knew not Joseph” (Ex. 1:8). A change in dynasty transformed the free Israelites into a race of slaves, a subject people.

The Egyptians “set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens” (verse 11). We are told that the Israelites were put to work building the pharaoh’s “treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses,” located in the eastern Nile Delta. It was over that area that I passed during my southward flight from Cyprus.

“And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour,” the account continues. “And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field” (verses 13-14).

The oppression of the Israelites grew increasingly bitter. Following Moses’ first face-to-face confrontation with Pharaoh, still another burden was placed upon the Israelites: “Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying, You shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves” (Ex. 5:6-7).

Ancient inscriptions show that mud brick was the almost universal building material in Egypt. Bricks were in constant demand by contractors. (The Egyptian word for brick, *tobe*, is the origin of the modern word *adobe*.)

Were you to visit the tomb of Rekh-mi-Re in the Tombs of the Nobles in Thebes, you would see a remarkable wall painting illustrating the step-by-step process of ancient brickmaking (shown in part, in accompanying photo). Rekh-mi-Re (ca. 1450 B.C.) was grand vizier under Thutmose III and his son Amenhotep II of Dynasty 18.

The contemporary tomb painting depicts the same procedure followed by the Israelite slaves. Imagine your-

self, clad only in a linen apron, laboring relentlessly under a scorching desert sun as a forced worker in this ancient “assembly line”:

First, a fellow worker draws water to make mud, into which others knead chaff or chopped straw. Then you carry away the mixture of mud and chaff in buckets to the brickmakers and dump it on a pile. The mud is then shaped in rectangular wooden molds and set out to dry in the sun. Finally, the finished bricks are carried off to the building site.

The painting also shows foremen, carrying sticks, watching closely over the workers. A hieroglyphic inscription accompanying the painting has one of the Egyptian overseers sternly warning his slaves: “The rod is in my hand. Be not idle!”

Ten plagues were ultimately required to gain the Israelites’ release from bondage. At the time of the Exodus, Israel numbered more than 600,000 men 20 years of age and above, plus women and children (Num. 1:46). The total probably approached three million. It is not surprising that Pharaoh was reluctant to part with such a massive supply of cheap slave labor.

But Pharaoh lost in the end. After the Egyptian firstborn were slain on the night of the Passover, he had little choice but to relent. One of the most barbarous chapters in the history of man’s oppression of his fellowman came to a triumphal end (Num. 33:3).

Slavery — today?

All would agree that the slavery of ancient Israel was a bitter and unsavory episode. But, though most people don’t realize it, the entire world today is in slavery! No one — not even you or I — is excluded!

That slavery is of two types. The majority in the world today is in slavery to sin. This slavery is more insidious and more oppressive than any physical bondage of ages past.

Jesus declared that “Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin” (John 8:34). The word translated “servant” in the King James Version is the Greek word *doulos*, meaning “slave.”

The apostle Peter calls the ungodly “the servants [slaves] of corruption:

(Continued on page 22)

By John Halford

Was it impossible for the hardhearted Pharaoh of the Exodus to have changed, even if he had wanted to?

And if Pharaoh didn't really have a chance, what about the Israelites? Was God playing games with them, too — tempting and trying them, but at the same time "hardening their hearts" and "stiffening their necks" so that they didn't really have any hope of succeeding?

If we let ourselves think so, we are missing one of the most important lessons of the Exodus. The Bible says such lessons have special significance for those who are, in this end time, standing on the threshold of the world tomorrow and God's Kingdom (1 Cor. 10:11).

So let's examine the case of the Pharaoh who would not let Israel go.

A stubborn man

We know from Pharaoh's treatment of the Israelites that he was a cruel and greedy man. He was obsessed with building cities and monuments, regardless of the human suffering it caused.

He was also an unusually stubborn man — a dictator, not used to listening to reason and advice.

God knew this. Before He sent His servant Moses to confront the Pharaoh, God warned Moses, "I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go" (Ex. 3:19). And sure enough, Pharaoh wouldn't.

At first, Moses

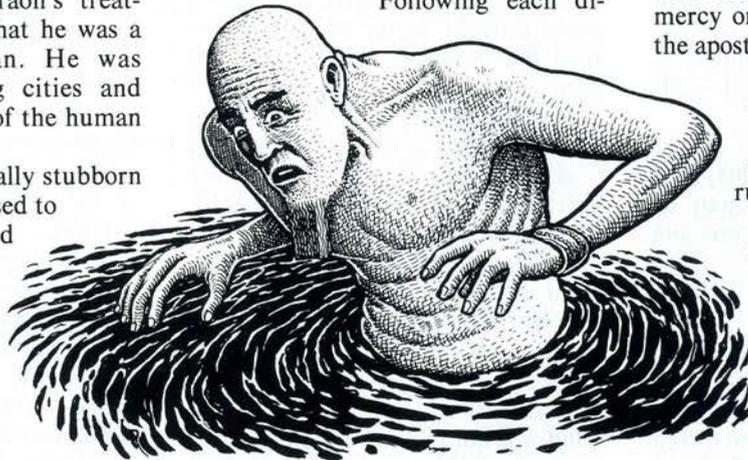
asked Pharaoh for permission to hold a feast in the wilderness just three days distant. But Pharaoh's reaction was to increase the already overburdened slaves' workload until the slaves' tasks became impossible.

God then told Moses that He was going to deal with Pharaoh in such a way that this stubborn king, far from wanting to keep his slaves, would literally drive them out of his kingdom (Ex. 6:1). But it would not be easy. Pharaoh had smugly told Moses, "I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go" (Ex. 5:2).

So, in a series of devastating plagues, God revealed Himself to Pharaoh and showed Pharaoh what happened when He was disobeyed.

First the Nile River turned to blood. The fish in the river died. The water became unfit to drink. Then a horrendous plague of frogs came up from the river, infesting even Pharaoh's very palace.

Following each di-



saster, Pharaoh would summon Moses and ask that the plague be removed, promising to let Israel go. But as soon as relief came, he changed his mind (Ex. 8:15).

Study this story carefully. In some cases the Bible says God hardened Pharaoh's heart, while elsewhere it says that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. Does this mean that there were times when Pharaoh wanted to change his mind, but God would not let him?

Not at all. God doesn't tempt, tease or torture people like that.

Remember that Pharaoh was carnal, and that the carnal mind "is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). This stubborn, determined despot epitomized carnality. He had made it quite clear — had boasted, even — that he was not subject to the law of God, neither indeed would be!

God could have softened Pharaoh's heart suddenly and dramatically by intervening in his life, as He did with Saul on the road to Damascus. God had mercy on the man who later became the apostle Paul.

But He did not, at this time, decide to have mercy on Pharaoh. He was not ready to call the Egyptian ruler.

Is this unfair? No. God will eventually offer a chance for salvation to every human being, as He carries out His 7,000-year plan of salvation. But exactly when He chooses to begin

Stubborn Pharaoh was shocked when the Nile River, around which Egyptian worship centered, turned to blood!

Did Pharaoh Really Have a Chance?

Was Pharaoh doomed from the start — predestined to have his mind set against God's will as his nation tumbled in ruins around him?

working with an individual is something only God can decide — it is none of our business (Rom. 9:14-23).

The plagues continue

But back to the story. We left Pharaoh knee-deep in dead frogs, and as unresilient as ever. Plagues of lice and then flies were next, infesting Egypt with insects (Ex. 8:16-24).

Up until this time, Pharaoh's magicians had been able to duplicate the miracles God performed through Moses. But they were at a loss to show Pharaoh that the lice were "just another of Moses' tricks." Even the corrupt and degenerate pagan priests had to admit that this was "the finger of God" (verse 19).

Temporarily driven to distraction, Pharaoh grudgingly conceded to Moses' demands. But again, as soon as the bugs were removed, he changed his mind.

God next infected the Egyptians' cattle with a contagious disease. The Egyptians reported to Pharaoh that this disease was only affecting their cattle — those belonging to the Israelites were completely immune (Ex. 9:7). Pharaoh was unimpressed — his heart was still hard.

Then God told Moses to scatter dust into the wind. As this dust touched living creatures, man or beast, they broke out in hideous and painful boils. Even those in Pharaoh's court were affected. But still Pharaoh would not give in (verse 12).

So God sent a terrible hailstorm to lash Egypt; the hail smashed trees, homes and crops and killed men or beasts caught in the open. Fire mixed with the hail turned areas of the once lush Nile Valley into smoking ruins.

Faced with this holocaust, even Pharaoh was daunted. "I have sinned this time," he admitted. "Intreat the Lord (for it is enough) that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer" (Ex. 9:27-28).

Moses didn't believe Pharaoh (verses 29-30), and he was right. As soon as the skies cleared and the worst of the trial was over, Pharaoh's heart was once again hardened (verses 34-35).

Moses went back to the vain king.

If Pharaoh refused to humble himself, locusts would swarm in to eat what was left of the battered country's crops (Ex. 10:3-6).

Egypt's leaders and politicians were appalled. Didn't the king know that Egypt was already in ruins? What was he trying to do? But Pharaoh was like some world leaders today, who would rather see their nations collapse than give up their power and fanatical ideas.

Once Moses asked God to remove the locusts, Pharaoh was as unbending as ever. Even several days of thick, blinding dust storms didn't move him. In fact, at the end of this plague, Pharaoh broke off negotiations. He told Moses to get out and not come back (verses 27-28).

Moses left, but not before warning of one last, terrible plague — the death of all of Egypt's firstborn. You know the rest of the story. With his once proud and powerful nation shattered and hundreds of thousands of his people dead, Pharaoh ordered the Israelites out.

But even as they were leaving, he again thought better of it. He pursued the Israelites until, finally, his army was drowned in the Red Sea.

Pharaoh never gave in! He would not be subject to the instructions of God. God tolerated this incredibly obstinate man for several weeks, because God had decided to use him as an example (Ex. 9:16). The carnal mind is hostile to God. Pharaoh's behavior showed just how hostile the carnal mind can be, given the opportunity.

But a carnal, hostile, unbelieving mind was not the exclusive proclivity of Pharaoh. Ancient Israel proved just as hostile and hardhearted toward God and His ways as Pharaoh had been. The Red Sea had scarcely closed behind them before they began their complaining.

The next 40 years were a continuing story of bad attitudes, faithlessness, disobedience, stubbornness, rebellion, idolatry, grumbling, murmuring and discontent. Like Pharaoh, Israel never really learned the lesson.

Remember: In dealing with these ancient people, Israelite and Egyptian, God was not offering spiritual

salvation. He was using them to write a lesson, so that those who have been offered spiritual salvation can understand and heed.

Holy Spirit needed

These experiences show that a human mind, without God's Holy Spirit, cannot learn spiritual lessons — cannot have a constructive and positive relationship with God and do His will. Romans 8:8 makes this clear: "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

Without the help of the Holy Spirit, Pharaoh could not overcome his self-will and obstinacy — even though his nation was being destroyed. Without the Holy Spirit, ancient Israel could not show faith and confidence in God. By nature, the Israelites were a stubborn, self-willed, stiff-necked people who wanted their own way. Their human nature prevailed to the end.

What we should remember, three and a half millennia later, is that we can be just the same. Human nature hasn't changed. There is a potential Pharaoh or ancient Israelite inside all of us.

Paul warned in Hebrews 3:7-8, "To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness."

Unlike those people, we, if we are truly converted, do not have to have "hard hearts." God has given us access to the Holy Spirit, which can soften our hearts.

We *can* learn spiritual lessons. When God corrects us, it *can* make a permanent difference. We can meet trials and obstacles with faith. We don't have to keep on making the same mistakes over and over again, as they did. With the Holy Spirit, we can grow. Instead of resisting God's law, we can keep it.

But we can only behave this way if we use the Holy Spirit. If we lose it or neglect it, our hearts begin to harden again — they become, once more, potentially as hard as Pharaoh's. But if we use God's Spirit, we can change.

Two stood out

The stories of the Exodus and of

Israel in the wilderness do not include many examples of good attitudes. They are a rather dismal record of resistance, lack of vision and rebellion.

But two people stand out: Joshua and Caleb. Their good example should also be studied and remembered by those on whom the end of this world has come.

About 18 months after leaving Egypt, Israel was ready to enter the promised land. God had by then given the Israelites ample evidence that with His help, no problem was insurmountable.

Before the multitude of Israelites invaded the promised land, Moses sent Joshua, Caleb and 10 others on a reconnaissance. After 40 days they returned, most with negative reports.

Yes, most of the spies reported, Canaan was a good land, flowing with milk and honey. But, they continued, you should just see the obstacles! Hostile tribes, fortified cities — and if all that wasn't bad enough, there were giants in the land! Better forget it and go back to Egypt (Num. 13:27-29).

Then Caleb spoke up. Sure, there were problems, he admitted, but hadn't they learned that with God's help, all obstacles could be overcome? So, he urged, they should go on in faith and do what God had told them they must, "for we are well able to overcome it" (verse 30).

But the bad attitudes prevailed. So God sentenced these faithless people to 40 years of homeless wandering, once again to teach a lesson. And of the multitude that came out of Egypt, only Joshua and Caleb were allowed to enter the promised land.

What was it about Joshua and Caleb that set them apart? Read Numbers 14:24: "But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land."

Caleb and his friend Joshua had learned some lessons. They approached the difficulties of overcoming and doing God's Work in a positive, "can-do" attitude. They were allowed to lead Israel into Canaan 40 years later.

Notice that many years later Caleb

still showed his positive attitude toward doing what God expected:

Joshua led the children of Israel into the promised land. God told Israel that if they trusted Him, they would be successful in driving out the Canaanites from their strongholds. But the Israelites did not totally trust God, and many pockets of Canaanite resistance remained. One of these was Mt. Hebron, where the Anakim (giants) had fortified cities.

Most of the Israelites gave up hope of taking the mountain. But not Caleb. Though he was 85 years old, he went to see Joshua.

"I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me," Caleb reminded Joshua (Josh. 14:11). "Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said" (verse 12).

And drive them out Caleb did. "Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb . . . because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel" (verse 14).

The example of Joshua and Caleb shows that God will reward a positive attitude. When God works through people, He expects them to have a yielded, constructive approach to the things that must be done — whether it be driving out Canaanites, overcoming personal sins or reaching this world with the Gospel.

A positive approach

All these experiences were just a type of far greater events that will soon come to pass. The Israelites' entrance into the promised land was a type of our entering the Kingdom of God. The overcoming of the Canaanite tribes typifies our need to overcome this world and our human nature.

In addition, the Israelites' physical "rest" in the promised land of Canaan was only a type (Heb. 4). It is the millennial rest, pictured by the Sabbath, that we must focus on. Only God's Kingdom can truly bring rest to this miserable world.

A rest from what? Not from work

— Christ is coming back to earth to get things done. The Kingdom of God on earth will be a rest from vanity, selfishness, greed, negativism, failure and frustration.

Those who work closest with Christ in His government must set an example of humble, cheerful, agreeable cooperation. As the Family of God sets about the colossal job of rebuilding the world after 6,000 years of misrule, we will have to take a positive, constructive, can-do approach to the things God wants done. There can be no place for disobedient, selfish, negative, hard-hearted defeatists.

No wonder, then, that God wants us to thoroughly understand the hardheartedness of Pharaoh and the ancient Israelites. Only then can we be sure that we don't fall "after the same example of unbelief" and disqualify ourselves from entering God's Kingdom (Heb. 4:11).

Pharaoh will have a chance

One day, long in the future, Pharaoh will be resurrected, along with millions of others. The books of the Bible will be opened to his understanding (Rev. 20:12).

He may read, with growing consternation, the story of his resistance and hostility to the will of God — the God he now must meet for judgment. He will learn what it feels like to stand before a throne of power, needing royal favor and mercy. Perhaps he will be expecting the worst.

But things will be different then — it will be Pharaoh's eternal life that is at stake. He will learn that this God whom he once despised holds no grudges and has no spirit of revenge.

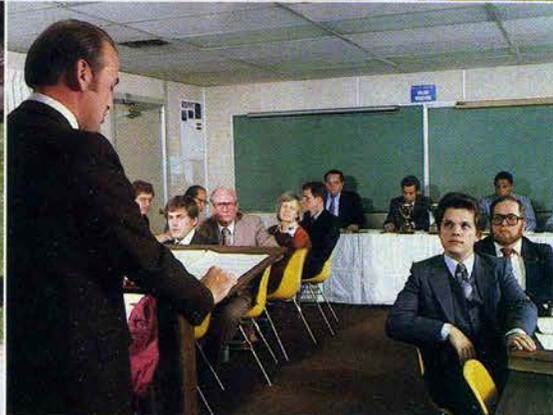
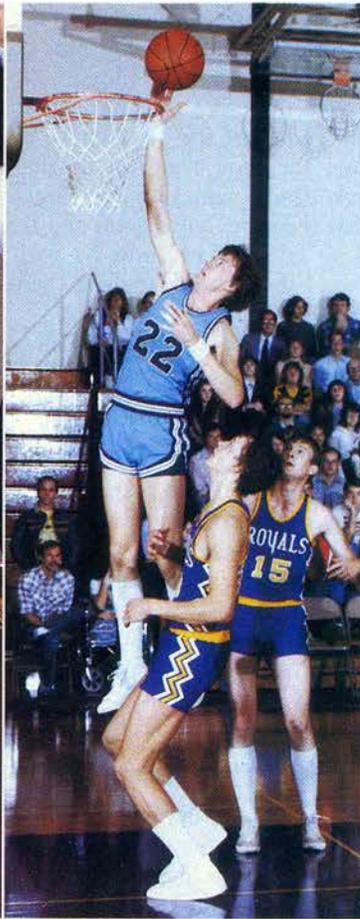
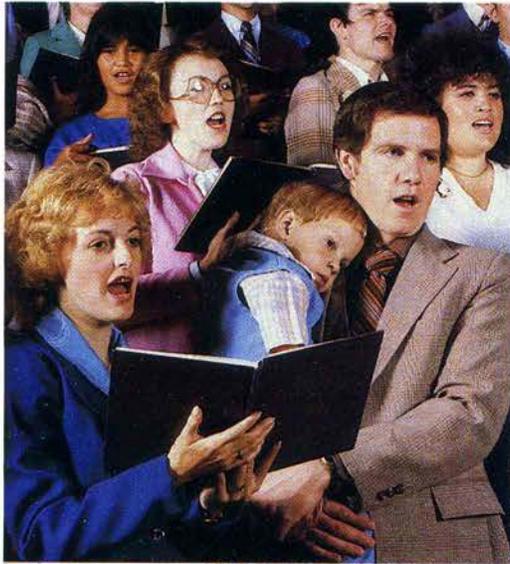
Jesus Christ may review, once again, Pharaoh's awful record of rebellion. Then, in a voice of authority, but tempered with compassion and mercy, He may tell the now sobered and fearful ex-king: "I want to remove your sins as far as the east is from the west. If you will now repent, I will give you the gift of the Holy Spirit, which will soften that hard heart of yours. Pharaoh, will you surrender?"

And this time, Pharaoh probably will! □

Are You HAPPY in God's Church?

Real happiness is a rare commodity today! Does your life reflect the very joy of Jesus Christ?

By Carn A. Catherwood



There goes a happy man! How I wish I were like him!

This is often the silent thought of people when they see another person who simply radiates real happiness.

This or a similar thought often strikes new members of God's Church the first time they attend Sabbath services and see the deep joy and open, infectious smiles of many of God's people.

A hearty enthusiasm, a vigorous "let's pitch in" attitude, a congenial family warmth permeates the services, social events, schools, good times — and even bad times — of God's people.

The Church of God has a definite personality. God's Word proclaims, "Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord" (Ps. 144:15).

But, are you happy?

Are you deeply, genuinely, overwhelmingly happy that you are called, chosen, much-blessed member of the very Church that Christ Himself built?

Why unhappy members?

What about the exceptions to the rule? What about the long-faced, glum, unsmiling, "martyred" member who feels burdened with the ways of God?

What about that minority of brethren who are merely waiting it out, defensively transforming every minor problem into a mountainous trial of fantastic proportions?

How does God react before the spectacle of a begotten son of His who doesn't truly rejoice over the fantastic deluge of physical and spiritual blessings he is granted?

The biblical predictions of the calamities soon to befall the modern nations of Israel are sobering. Contained within one of the most detailed of these prophecies is a specific, pointed warning that can apply not only to the collective nation of Israel, but just as easily to individual members of God's Church. Notice carefully:

"Moreover all these curses shall

come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee: And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder . . .

"Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart [with real happiness], for the abundance of all things; Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee" (Deut. 28:45-48).

Do you men enjoy and really anticipate Spokesman Club? Or is it a duty you plow through because it seems to be expected of you?

Is the food line at the Feast of Tabernacles just one more inconvenience you put up with? Or do you make it into a happy, enjoyable opportunity to fellowship and draw closer to other brethren standing around you in the same line?

Do you extend a warm, smiling welcome to every new face at Sabbath services? Or are you so completely engrossed in the week's problems, your own ingoing self-pity and disinterest in others that new faces go unnoticed?

Do you remember experiencing a certain thrill, a family closeness, a deep joy to stand shoulder to shoulder with many thousands of other brethren at the Feast of Tabernacles, as the swelling sounds of singing voices ascended to please God before His throne? Or did you bide your time, a little self-consciously, waiting for the routine of the song service to get over, refusing to even sing?

God's Spirit and personality is warm, loving, outgoing and positive. It is kind, concerned, cordial and happy. Read about the overwhelmingly positive, outgoing personality of a true Christian in I Corinthians 13:4-7. If you are defensive, unhappy, uninvolved, "martyred" and glum, you are expressing a totally different attitude and personality that is not of God.

You strike God Himself a heavy blow! Your attitude makes it abun-

dantly clear that you consider God's precious, holy, eternal truth a great burden you must grit your teeth and bear. You view as curses the trials God has lovingly designed to properly fashion your character for His Kingdom.

You are, unintentionally perhaps, unhappy with God Himself.

A serious warning

You were born into an unhappy world. Perhaps you grew up in an unhappy or broken home. Maybe you were reared in an economically depressed area. Brethren in some parts of the world have lived through the sorrows, horror and hopelessness of warfare.

The average individual today tends, and with reason, to look on the black side of things. Skyrocketing disease sucks health and happiness out of the bodies of millions of disillusioned human beings. Society is crammed with ugly, wretched problems.

Happiness is a rare commodity nowadays!

Your attitude, outlook on life, emotions and personality have been deeply affected by this environment of which we are all products.

It is certainly natural and understandable that, before conversion, you may have become hostile and dissatisfied toward society, mad at the world, unhappy with your situation, job, family and self.

Perhaps you withdrew to one degree or another from this society that had caused you nothing but woe, strife and tears. You viewed with suspicion "getting involved." You became sullen, introverted and inexpressive.

Did that individual really perish when you were baptized?

The danger is that many of us have simply carried over into our relationship with God Himself, His Church and the other brethren the introversion, the unhappiness and the suspicion of the world.

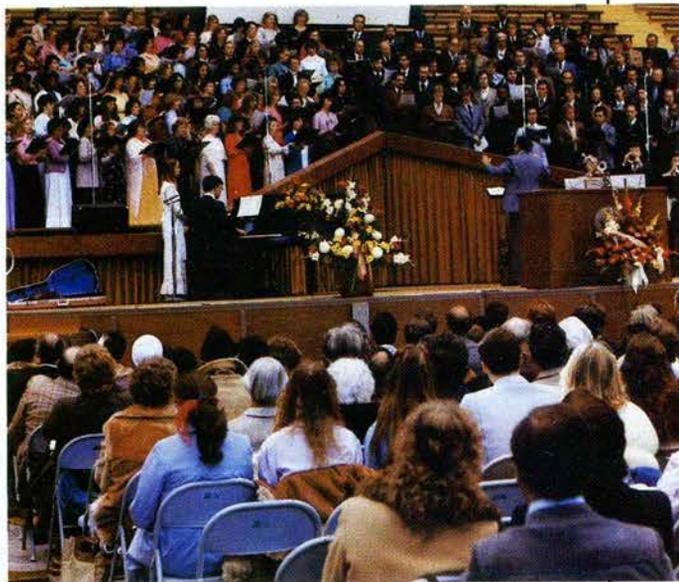
This is wrong. It can only hurt you and hinder the Work of God.

Personality of God's people

God literally fished you out of the cesspool that is this society to become a part of the happiest, warmest, most dynamic, enthusiastic organization on earth.

"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad," Christ instructed His disciples. "Let your light so shine before men," He decreed (Matt. 5:12, 16).

Do you shine?



Is your light brightly shining, warming and illuminating others around you and in God's Church? Or is your light weak, flickering, vacillating and on the verge of being extinguished? Perhaps an example will help you answer.

Several years ago, more than 5,000 of us had gathered in the mammoth tent-tabernacle on Jekyll Island, Ga., to enjoy the annual Church fun show for the eastern area of the Feast of Tabernacles.

It was a happy, laughing, rejoicing crowd that arrived for an evening of clean, balanced fun and Christian fellowship.

Suddenly a torrential ocean gale pounded down several inches of rain, splashing in tiny rivulets through the straining, heavy seams of the big tent. What had begun as a fun show became a morass of drenched clothing, wrecked hairdos, mud, water and

waterlogged brethren. Members of any worldly organization might have left in a huff, sullen, peeved, bemoaning the evening that had been washed out. What a bleak, dismal, unhappy spectacle that would have been.

But that was not the picture.

Satan could not dampen the personality and spirit of the people of God. It was quite a sight.

Most people stayed to fellowship and dangle their toes in two-inch deep water that covered much of the tent floor. The show had to be canceled but the band struck up several rousing musical selections, and people sang in the rain until the rain stopped. Dozens of people mentioned that they had met more new brethren in that waterlogged tent than on any other occasion.

To say that the spirit and attitude of God's people was overwhelming is to put it mildly. God was undoubtedly more than well pleased. He Himself was probably overjoyed.

Our light shone brightly!

After the rain ceased, hundreds of brethren pitched in wholeheartedly to assist others in setting up tents that had collapsed in the rain.

Water had leaked into some motel rooms, soaking every scrap of clothing of a few brethren. People again pitched in to sweep out the water and to lend and share dry clothing, all in a spirit of comradeship, love and concern.

It was a heartwarming demonstration of the irrepressible personality of the Church of God. And this example is only one of the many that any of us could recount.

The majority of our brethren remembered God's command in Deuteronomy 12:7: "And there [the location where the Feast is held] you shall eat before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice in all that you put your hand unto [even in the rain], you and your households, wherein the Lord your God hath blessed you."

And a majority did. And they were abundantly blessed.

But, unfortunately, the coin had two sides. One couple had arrived in Jekyll Island prepared not to enjoy the Feast.

They had tried to obtain permission to attend the Feast in another

area in order to be nearer their unconverted relatives. Permission had not been given. They went down to Jekyll Island begrudgingly, glumly, sullenly.

On arrival they decided their motel room was too small. The food was not to their liking. They began to skip services and sulk childishly by themselves. Nothing was satisfactory. The rain was the last straw.

They left! They have not come back. They were terribly unhappy in God's Feast of joy.

What a paradox! A little rain at God's Feast became a solidifying catalyst that drew most of the brethren closer than ever before in mutual love, concern and closeness. But to a few, it became a bad memory that put a damper on the entire Festival.

God martyrs no one in His Church. If you are martyred, you have only yourself to blame.

How can you, then, be happy?

Become involved

Unhappy members are invariably uninvolved members.

This is the individual who is too shy, too embarrassed, too tired or too busy to pitch in and take part. He or she thinks up 101 excuses why he or she can't attend the social, be in Spokesman Club or Ladies' Club or fellowship with other members.

Can we grasp that God's Church has not sponsored useless activities to frivolously take up our time? God has inspired within the framework of His Church a balanced amount of social leisure, besides the more important spiritual character-builders of services, Bible studies and broadcasts. All of these have, or ought to have, an important place in all of our lives.

Active, energetic participation in the activities God sponsors through His Church will create a balanced, positive, happy outlook on life.

Note God's command in Psalm 149:2-3: "Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise his name in the dance [or a church social or a ball game]: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp."

Yes, you should even regard a song service as an opportunity to express

your happiness and appreciation. Notice verse 1 of the same chapter: "Praise you the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints."

The facts are simply these, however: Most of our "martyred" brethren scrupulously avoid the very areas that would help them become happy. Loners are never happy in the world. And they are not happy in God's Church.

You ought to pray fervently; it's vital. You will never grow without prayer. You need to work hard. Of course, intensive study is a real necessity. But there is more.

Play hard as well. Learn to mix. One requirement of eldership in God's Church is that a man be "given to hospitality" (I Tim. 3:2). If you are able, entertain other brethren in your home at times. Become involved. Strike a real balance.

Your "martyred member" complex will begin to crumble and collapse.

Serve the brethren

There are other real blocks to happiness that need to be ripped down.

The unhappy society that surrounds us is predicated on selfishness, greed and ego. People concentrate body and mind on the empirical self. Cater to the ego. Take — never give!

Can people like this really exist in God's Church? Might your inability to really open up to share yourself, your life, your home, your leisure time with others be a big part of the reason for your attitude problems and the spiritual doldrums that strike?

When Christ, the night before His death, bent down and washed the feet of His disciples, He instituted a service of sublime humility. He pictured Himself as a servant of all the brethren.

On His knees before the disciples, He affirmed: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if you do them" (John 13:16-17).

Here is a fantastic truth that creates real happiness — a living spiritual truth that works. Do you use it? Do you serve the brethren? Are you

in a permanent, year-long “foot-washing” attitude toward every member of God’s Church?

Analyze yourself. When was the last time you really pitched in to serve a brother in need? Have you ever fasted when another member or his child was sick? Or do you only fast about your problems?

Do you make it your business to encourage and inspire a brother who is down in the dumps? Or are you always on the receiving end? Are you a taker or a giver?

Real happiness can never grow and flourish in a climate ruled by self.

Uproot self by serving. Smash the grip self has by extending yourself to the brethren, and to others in the world at appropriate times.

Do we all realize how many of our brethren are still scattered outside local church areas? How many do you serve by writing letters of encouragement and news?

There are scores of widows, elderly members and sick and crippled members in God’s Church around the world. When was the last time you broke your social circle of close friends and brethren to spend a week-night or a Sunday afternoon with someone who is too frequently neglected?

Remember Christ’s admonition, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). Here is a vital spiritual lesson for all of us to learn. Begin now to serve. It is a living key to happiness.

Pray for joy

Shortly before His death, as the last hours of His life streaked by, Christ stated, “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” (John 15:11).

He was referring to a divine miracle by which His outgoing, warm, enthusiastic, happy personality could be supernaturally grafted within the minds of members of His Church.

Do you fit the picture? Christ predicted that the true Church would be composed of people who would radiate the personality He had as a human being.

Christ, as a man, continually inspired and sparked His disciples by

His wholehearted vigor and enthusiasm. In spite of the heavy responsibilities He shouldered and the multiple trials He had to confront, His personality bubbled with the joy of being able to serve human beings, and contribute so dramatically in His Father’s great plan.

Christ was not an introvert, glumly hiding in a cave in the Judean hills. He seized opportunities to dance, sing and rejoice socially. He mixed happily with His fellows. His outgoing concern and interest for human beings shamed the original apostles on occasions when they let themselves become vindictive, critical and harsh.

Jesus Christ was undoubtedly the happiest man who has ever lived.

Notice Paul’s command: “Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. . . . Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:2-5).

The Church of God “personality” we have acquired is nothing more than the nature and personality of Christ Himself, still alive, flowing out miraculously through the collective body, the Church, that He has built.

When did you last pray for joy as an individual specific fruit? Before a church social event, have you ever asked for the love, the joy, the enthusiasm of Christ to be reflected through you?

Do you pray for the selfless, serving love of Christ — His love in you — to counteract the natural, unsmiling self-interest we all manifest to a certain degree? Have you ever specifically requested Christ’s enthusiasm and vigor — His sparkling warmth — to be mirrored in you during a Spokesman Club meeting?

Christ wants more than anything

else to live in you fully. Notice His instruction in Luke 11:9-13: “And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find . . . For every one that asketh receiveth . . . If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? . . . If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?”

Certainly, some of God’s people are by nature bashful and introverted,



perhaps inexperienced in the social graces. God has called the weak of this society. We are often the end products of poor backgrounds and wrong environments.

But there is no reason to stay that way. God supplies an antidote that works.

Ask for enthusiasm. Ask for warmth. Ask God to help you smile. Ask for these Spirit-given abilities and character traits to flow out through you. You will begin to be far happier than you have ever been. And it will be God’s happiness in you, the true personality of the people of God.

Remember that God’s Kingdom will soon be here. It will be a time of worldwide rejoicing, peace, happiness and joy. Remember also that only those who have been happy now in God’s Church will teach all mankind to be happy then. □



Does Your Appearance Count?

How important is grooming? Is God concerned about your dress and appearance? Can you be spiritually clean and at the same time be physically unclean?

By Leroy Neff

Have you ever been revolted by the appearance or dress of another person?

You may have seen, in a public place such as a supermarket or a movie theater, an unshaven man dressed in ill-fitting, dirty clothing, and wondered why he would allow himself to be seen like that.

Have you ever seen a woman with unusual makeup, a wild hairdo and garish clothing? You might have shrunk back, thinking she looked like a witch.

What about young men with

straggly, dirty hair, dressed in torn T-shirts and tattered jeans, perhaps barefoot? When you come across such a sight in a shopping center or on the street, don't you wonder what kind of parents such young men have?

Surely you have seen such people, and you probably couldn't understand why someone would have such poor taste or such a lack of concern for others as to appear in public like that.

In recent years the fad has been "dressing down" instead of "dressing up." Wearing old-looking, mismatched, ragged clothing, even to special functions, has become perfectly acceptable.

When I was a boy I was forced, because our family was poor, to wear bib overalls. This was somewhat demeaning for me, as other boys from more prosperous families could wear shirts and trousers.

Today, though, bib overalls seem to be perfectly proper garb for anyone of either sex. Apparently what was work clothing to an earlier generation is now *de rigueur* in most any situation for many city folk.

You probably have seen someone with long hair walking down the street and couldn't be sure whether the person was male or female.

An abysmal lack of training in dress, grooming and hygiene, evidenced by the increasing number of

Photo by Roland Rees

"strange"-looking people on display in public, is apparent today. You can see such people at almost any time in almost any locale.

But wait. You may see sights that are unpleasant or appear improper to you, but are you concerned about how *you* look?

How do you appear to God?

You may easily see many faults in the dress and appearance of others, especially when they are extreme. But how do you appear to other people? And more important, how do you appear before God? Is He concerned?

God most certainly does care about how you look. If you are a true Christian, you are one of the few lights in this dark world (Matt. 5:14). But what kind of a light are you?

God's mind is expressed in the Bible, so let's see some of the things God says in the Bible about grooming and dress.

When God placed Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, He commanded them to dress and keep the garden (Gen. 2:15). Here is a great principle: We should properly care for what God gives us. We should not let it grow up in weeds and thistles. It should be kept in good condition, neat and orderly.

This principle applies to our property and our homes, as well as to our persons. It includes how we dress, how we keep our hair, how clean we are. God says our bodies are the temple of His Holy Spirit (I Cor. 3:17).

Can you imagine God's holy Temple, as described in Ezekiel 40-48, in a dirty, filthy, unkempt condition? Of course not!

When Adam and Eve first decided to make clothing for themselves, they selected materials that could be easily put together. They took large fig leaves and sewed them together (Gen. 3:7).

Too many people are like that today: They make only a minimal effort to properly clothe themselves, and just "throw something together." Or they may wear some cast-off, worn-out, poorly designed or shoddily constructed garment.

God does not do things this way. When He made clothing for Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:21), He made outer garments of leather or fur and

clothed them. He did not make loin-cloth out of animal skins, as some people think — the Bible says God made coats for Adam and Eve. The outer garments God made for them were of the finest, most durable material.

God commands cleanliness

When God established His law with ancient Israel, He gave the people certain physical laws that regulated their relationships with each other. Among these laws were regulations concerning cleanliness and sanitation.

If a person sinned or became ceremonially unclean, he or she had to go through a certain ritual, which usually included bathing in water. These laws were intended to teach the people obedience. The washings pictured the spiritual cleanness that would later be available through the sacrifice of Christ.

The laws relating to these carnal or physical washings are no longer a religious obligation today, as the apostle Paul explained (Heb. 9:10).

Yet the people who obeyed these physical laws of cleanliness were different from the gentiles around them. The gentiles did not have such laws that caused them to learn physical cleanliness. Since the Israelites frequently became ceremonially unclean, they had to bathe frequently. Imagine, if you will, state laws that commanded people to bathe frequently!

The parents of those early Israelites surely taught their children to be clean, too. Some of this teaching has been handed down from generation to generation to the present time. Today, the nations that are aware of and apply the principles of cleanliness reap numerous benefits.

God was particularly concerned about His priests. The priests were bound by even stricter regulations concerning cleanliness than were the lay people. The priests had to be physically clean when they ministered in the tabernacle or Temple.

The whole subject of cleanness of person and dress for the priesthood was summed up in Isaiah 52:11: "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord."

When God came down to speak to the children of Israel at Mt. Sinai, He

gave Moses specific instruction about how the people should appear before Him. They were commanded to wash their clothes (Ex. 19:10).

God did not permit His people to appear before Him physically dirty and wearing unkempt clothing, as many religious people today appear before their gods. We know God requires spiritual cleanliness today, but those who really are developing clean spiritual character should be practicing traits of physical cleanliness, too.

God is still particular about how His people appear before Him — for instance, at Sabbath services. But some people have not learned this yet. It is time to put away ignorance, disrespect and filthiness. God will not permit us to inherit His Kingdom if we have not been spiritually washed as a result of Christ's great sacrifice, and unless we also learn how to appear before Him respectfully, humbly, with appropriate clothing and clean!

Christ our example

Ezekiel 16 describes how God provided for ancient Jerusalem, which is a type of all Israel. In this passage, Israel is likened to a woman with Christ as her husband.

One of the first things Christ did when He found Israel was wash her and make her clean (verse 9). Notice how lavish God was with His gifts of clothing and jewelry for His bride. He provided only the finest clothing and jewels.

God is no cheapskate or tightwad. He is not out of touch with reality. The best is none too good for God. He expects the best from His servants, and in turn will pour out blessings we are not able to contain (Mal. 3:10).

God will prosper the faithful servant who obeys Him. It is God's desire that we all might prosper and be in health (III John 2).

God calls the weak and poor of the world (I Cor. 1:26-31, 2:5), but He does not expect us to stay that way. He expects us to prosper after we obey Him and change our ways, though this may take quite a time for some. This will make it possible to improve conditions that are not acceptable to Him.

Jesus showed that different occa-

sions require different kinds of clothing. In His parable of the wedding supper (Matt. 22:1-14), there was an appropriate garment for the occasion and no other was acceptable. Regular street dress, work clothes or the like would not do.

How would you dress for a wedding? Would you women come in your old housedress and you men in old work clothes? Of course not! You would dress for the occasion.

And yet many people are less concerned about how they appear before God on His Holy Sabbath than they are about how they appear at a wedding or funeral. We are more concerned about what people in the world think than we are about what God thinks.

White clothing is a symbol of righteousness (Rev. 19:8). Clothing that is really white is clean.

The angels are described in many places in the Bible as appearing in bright, white apparel. They are clothed in righteousness. For instance, Mary saw "two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain" (John 20:12).

If we overcome and qualify for God's Kingdom, we also will be clothed in white. This clothing will be fine linen, clean and white (Rev. 3:5, 19:8) and without spot or wrinkle (Eph. 5:27). God will not give His own born sons ill-fitting, threadbare or filthy clothing. He does not want His begotten sons to appear that way now.

What kind of example are you setting?

But some of God's begotten sons are not concerned about proper dress and cleanliness.

People have appeared before God at His services in shameful ways. They have come to His annual Holy Days, Bible studies and church services in all manner of improper clothing.

We all ought to examine ourselves concerning our clothing before we appear before God in church services. We ought to wear the best clothing we have, and our clothes should be cleaned and pressed.

Men normally ought to be in suits, with jacket and tie, and the women in their best dresses. A few exceptions

exist in some areas of the world, where custom or weather conditions dictate otherwise.

You women should ask yourselves if your attire conforms to the scriptural admonition regarding modest apparel (I Tim. 2:9). A few women in God's Church need to learn what modesty in dress really is. In some cases it might be necessary to ask your husband, or if you are a young woman you may need to ask a mature older woman.

We all should have had a bath, unless some unusual or extreme situation on a rare occasion may prevent that. We should not be overdressed or trying to imitate the latest fad or fashion. We need balance and propriety in our clothing and dress.

If you were going to have a private audience with Britain's Queen Elizabeth or U.S. President Ronald Reagan, how would you dress? Would you wear dirty, unpressed, ill-fitting clothes? Would you men come with a sport shirt and no tie, unshined shoes, uncombed hair? Would you women wear the same housedress or slacks that you had been wearing to clean the house? Of course not!

You would probably take more pains and be more concerned about how you would appear to one of this world's rulers than you now are concerned about how you appear before God, the great King of all the universe! What a shame! We are in God's presence when we attend His church services. We must always keep that in mind.

Some give the excuse that they are poor. It doesn't cost money to wash your clothes and press them or to mend them. But it does take work! Of course, it does cost money to have clothes dry-cleaned. After they have been cleaned and worn once, you may find it necessary to press them before they are worn again.

Some people who come to church really appear "run down at the heels." Yet some of these same people have good incomes. Sometimes they make more money than people who do present a good appearance. The concern a person shows and the effort he goes to are more important than how much money he makes.

People who should have known better have appeared at our Ambassa-

dor College commencement exercises dressed in clothing that should only be worn at casual occasions such as picnics or family outings. Commencement is a special occasion when suits and ties are expected for men and nice dresses should be worn by women. It is no time to appear in everyday or sports clothing.

God will supply your need

Jesus told us that we should seek His Kingdom first — that He would supply our physical necessities, including clothing: "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matt. 6:30).

How does God go about clothing us? He no longer makes fine leather or fur garments for us as He did for Adam and Eve. But if we seek God's Kingdom first and are diligent, He will make more readily available to us (by increased income, lower expenses, better "breaks") the materials or money for proper garments.

God has made a wealth of fine materials available for clothing: cotton, linen, silk, wool, furs, synthetics. We can have inferior, poorly designed, ill-fitting clothing that doesn't take much work to construct. Or we can select better quality materials, design them well and as a result have superior garments.

People are the products of the cultures in which they were reared. Many are too lazy or indifferent to improve themselves or their environments. But as God's people we must change if we are to grow enough to enter God's Kingdom. If we are used to shoddy goods, we must change. If we are used to filth and squalor, we must change.

God is now giving us time to change and grow to be more like Jesus Christ. Christ wore quality, seamless clothing (John 19:23). He was neat and orderly in His personal habits. He is the Author of order and beauty, not confusion, chaos and filth.

If you cannot improve your conditions because of low income, take your problem directly to God in fervent, heartrending prayer. Remind God of His promises, such as the
(Continued on page 28)

What God Knows About

FINANCES!

If God is intelligent enough to create the universe, wouldn't He be smart enough to understand finances? Then why not listen to what God reveals, in the Bible, about the subject?

By Herman L. Hoeh

Most people assume that tithing is the only law governing finances in the Bible — if they even believe in tithing! They could not be more wrong!

Granted, Abraham paid tithes to God's High Priest, Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20).

Granted, too, that man — not just the House of Israel and Judah — robs God when tithes and offerings are not paid.

Read it for yourself: "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed me. But you say, Wherein have we robbed you?" And God answers, "In tithes and offerings" (Mal. 3:8-12). Robbing God is a spiritual sin. And all men are commanded to quit sinning — that includes the sin of withholding God's tithes.

But tithing is not the only law governing financial well-being.

Not at all!

The right to property

Consider this: God created the earth. It is His. It is His to do with as He chooses. He has chosen to put man on the earth.

To the first man and woman, God revealed basic spiritual knowledge. That must have included one of the basic principles of love: You shall not

steal (Ex. 20:15).

When the first man, Adam, sinned, he stole fruit from a tree that God had put off limits to man. God had reserved that tree — the symbolic tree of the knowledge of good and evil — for Himself. It was God's property.

Man should have learned from this experience the importance God attaches to the right to property.

The first right or claim to property revealed in the Bible is, of course, God's claim to the earth (not to mention the universe).

Because the earth is God's, He has a prior claim to all that man produces from the earth. But God, being a fair God, set limits on Himself. He limited His claim to 10 percent. That is why it is called, in English, a *tithe*. *Tithe* is an old English word meaning "tenth."

In addition, God asks human beings to give generously, as each one is prospered. That is the give way — the way of love and outgoing concern for others.

But God's claim to the earth is revealed in another way, in addition to tithing. No nation on earth understands and practices what we are about to understand. If the nations did, there would not be periods of great depression or periods of massive inflation.

The God who owns the earth by

right of creation determines the bounds of national and tribal territories — and also the time that nations and peoples are permitted to live on their allotted lands.

"And he [God] made from one every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation" (Acts 17:26, Revised Standard Version).

In the days of Moses and Joshua, God determined that the Canaanites inhabiting the eastern Mediterranean coastlands had forfeited their right to the land because of their sins. God had earlier promised this land to Abraham and his descendants. Now the time had come to claim that physical promise.

God subdued the land before Joshua. The land was then divided among the tribes of Israel by lot. You will find this recorded in Joshua, beginning with chapter 13, verse 7, and continuing through chapter 19. Nearly seven chapters of your Bible are devoted to the careful apportioning of the land to each of the families of Israel.

God was in charge. After all, the earth is His. He determined, by lot, the right to property of His people.

No other nation in human history had God held so near that He took special care to see that each of the heads of families had a place to live

Photos by Roland Fries and Scott Smith

and land to cultivate. God was concerned that His nation would not become a country of landlords and impoverished tenants.

But this is not all. God had earlier revealed, in Moses' day, how the property He would allot was to be managed. God, you see, is not only Creator, He is also manager and financial adviser. How does God want the land that is ultimately His managed?

The forgotten jubilee

Turn to Leviticus 25, beginning especially with verse 8. Every 50 years a proclamation was to be made throughout the land. Its purpose was to bring jubilation to human hearts, a chance to have a fresh start in life. Here is what we read — and what the nations of this world seem to know nothing about:

“And you shall number seven sabbaths of years unto you [explained in the preceding seven verses], seven times seven years; and there shall be unto you the days of seven sabbaths of years, even forty and nine years. Then shall you make proclamation with the blast of the horn . . . throughout all your land.

“And you shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof; it shall be a jubilee unto you; and you shall return every man unto his possession, and you shall return every man unto his family” (verses 8-10, Jewish Publication Society translation).

Further, in verse 23, God said to Moses, “And the land shall not be sold in perpetuity; for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and settlers with Me.”

And verse 24, “And in all the land of your possession you shall grant a redemption for the land.”

What nation today follows these principles? Is it any wonder that about every 45 to 56 years the industrial world has suffered a major economic collapse? God set the jubilee in motion to correct just such problems.

There need not have been the economic crisis of the 1780s, for example, that ultimately led to the rise of Napoleon. Nor the crises of the 1830s, the 1880s, nor the Great

Depression of the 1930s that led to the rise of Hitler. Not only could the economic troubles of these near 50-year periods have been averted, but so could the terrible wars that often ensued.

An economic roller coaster is right now, in the 1980s, in motion. And the price we are paying for having so far escaped another Great Depression is the recent massive inflation. To avoid either ditch of inflation or depression, the money managers of this world are leading us through the rocky shoals of “stagflation.”

Forgotten altogether is God's cure — every 50 years a period of rejoicing in place of economic collapse or inflation. What could have been more wonderful in this material world?

How it would have worked

Here, in brief, is how it would have worked. If anyone became impoverished through some kind of mismanagement or poor judgment (and that includes get-rich-quick schemes), he could sell some of his land. But his relatives had an immediate right to exercise the give principle and redeem — buy back — the land from the new owner (Lev. 25:25). Relatives were expected to care for each other.

Or if the fellow who had become temporarily poor had accumulated money enough, he could buy back the land at any time and return to his possession (verses 26-27).

But if no one of his extended family could help him and he continued to be poor, then he always had the hope of a new start in the jubilee.

The creditor who bought some of his land had to relinquish use of it at the next jubilee (verse 28). Agricultural land and residential lots in small farming towns — the unwalled villages of antiquity (verse 31) — were never sold in perpetuity.

What a break for the small farmer! What a difference this would make in the quality of agriculture. Huge agribusinesses that have developed since the Great Depression would, if the jubilee were practiced today, vanish with one blow on the ram's horn on the Day of Atonement every 50 years (verse 9).



Developing one's talents is a major key to coping with the economic roller coaster of the 1980s. A willingness to work and being ready for new opportunities are important, as are faith in God and keeping one's heart in God's Work.

And families living in small farming towns would never permanently lose title to their homes through poverty. They and their children could receive them back free and clear every jubilee — if they could not redeem them (buy them back) earlier.

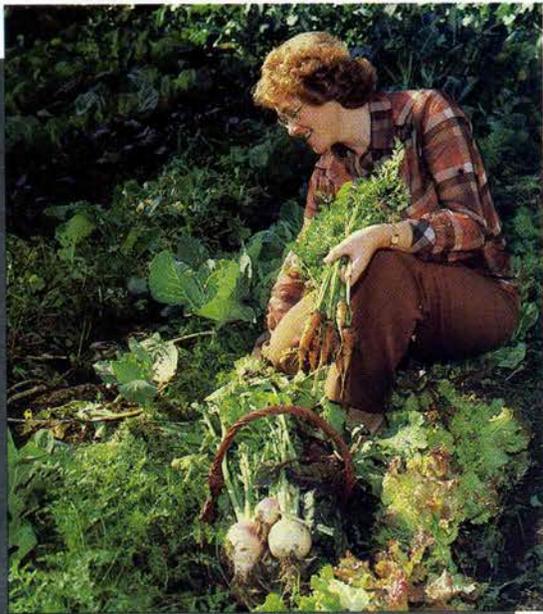
And another of the plagues of the modern world — the flight of millions of poor from the land to the major cities in search of elusive prosperity — would not exist. Wealth would not be concentrated in the hands of the few throughout the countryside.

God, of course, wisely foresaw that invested capital in major cities — the walled towns of antiquity (verses 29-30) — should be treated differently.

A former owner had a right of redemption for only a year on a piece of property he may have sold. If neither he nor his relatives could afford to buy back such city property, the new owner became the title holder in perpetuity. This law had the effect of encouraging urban development. Urban blight would have been discouraged.

Why not enforced today

Jesus announced that the law of the jubilee would be a cornerstone in reestablishing the government of God on earth (Luke 4:16-19). When He



returns He will reinstitute the jubilee — the “acceptable year of the Lord.” This He quoted from Isaiah 61:2. All commentators have correctly understood the reference in Isaiah to be to the jubilee.

Today, the nations have forgotten God and God’s law. Their governments have assumed to themselves the right to determine matters of inheritance, property title and transfer — all contrary to the laws of God.

God, of course, has allowed it — to the end that the nations learn the bitter fruits of going their own ways.

Jesus, in His ministry, refused to involve Himself in matters of inheritance in this world (Luke 12:13-14). So does the Worldwide Church of God today. Now is not the time God is restoring His government and His law to the world. He is only having an announcement made that He will restore it.

Then, when Jesus Christ returns, the nations, tribes and peoples will be brought under the government of God and assigned their own inheritance for a thousand years. The jubilee will be enforced. No more will greed reign.

Today, God expects each of us as individuals to tithe to His representatives, and to let farm land rest (lie fallow) according to the principles of Leviticus 25:1-7. But since title to property is today a secular matter regulated by the state, God’s Church cannot announce a jubilee — which is a national, not an individual, spiritual matter.

Every nation is reaping terrible economic penalties for not keeping the jubilee or the sabbaths of the land or tithing. And as long as we live in this world, we, too, reap some of the penalties brought on by the world’s rejection of God’s government and laws.

Members who are farmers have little or no control over farm prices. Members who are workers have little or no power to keep the company for which they work solvent. And members who are businessmen must learn to deal with a world filled with greed and selfishness.

Even the Jews have not been in a position to keep any jubilee since the days of the Assyrian invasion of their land.

A look at interest

One of the biggest economic curses today is high interest rates. Perhaps a more accurate and blunt way of wording it would be to say: One of the biggest economic curses today is interest! Let me explain.

When God set up His nation Israel under Moses and Joshua, He gave them a fundamental law:

“You shall not lend upon interest to your brother: interest of money, interest of victuals, interest of any thing that is lent upon interest” (Deut. 23:20, JPS).

God did permit Israel, a physical

nation living in this world, to charge interest of other nations, “but unto your brother you shall not lend upon interest; that the Lord your God may bless you in all that you put your hand unto, in the land whither you go in to possess it” (verse 21, JPS). This law, if applied today, would bring a nation renewed prosperity.

To especially care for the poor, God not only instituted a third tithe fund every third and sixth year out of seven (Deut. 14:28-29, 26:12-15), but He gave the Israelites another command. They were to lend to the needy (Deut. 15:1-11). Such loans were to be without interest to a fellow Israelite.

And if the loan, when past due, were not repaid by the end of the following sabbatical (seventh) year, the loan was to be forgiven.

How much better this method than the modern human legal procedures governing bankruptcy courts. The specter of short-term debts was wiped out in ancient Israel every seven years.

What a change that would make in today’s credit-charge and revolving-charge society. Here is one source of inflation that would be plucked up by its roots.

Jesus amplified the law on interest, given through Moses, in Luke 6:34-35. “Lend, hoping for nothing again,” He said (verse 35).

Paul was, later, inspired to prevent some from abusing others’ generosity:

“For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat” (II Thess. 3:10).

“For we hear,” Paul continued, “that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread” (verses 11-12).

God’s law is a law based on giving and outgoing concern for others. But that applies to the receiver as well as the giver.

Jesus, of course, understood that lending to the poor and needy, wheth-

er Israelite or gentile, was quite a different matter from investing capital as in a business.

Interest on return of invested capital in this kind of endeavor is permissible and expected. It is a form of legitimate profit.

In the parable of the pounds, Jesus said, "Why then did you not put my money into the bank, and at my coming I should have collected it with interest?" (Luke 19:23, RSV).

Advice in a world gone wrong

How to meet the unexpected in a world beset with high interest rates, illiquidity, rising unemployment, business recession, escalating costs of defense — that is the question.

Part of the answer we have already understood — faithful tithing, generous offerings, generosity to the needy, faith and trust in God who promises to bless the tithepayer.

Then there must be willingness to work. Some, in this world, seek job interviews to qualify to continue on unemployment.

Others seek out "hiring now — will train" signs so they can become employed. They are willing to train for new responsibilities and to study nights to improve their skills. They are the ones who will get ahead financially.

King Solomon understood the importance of being skilled in more than one field — of being willing to change jobs if necessary. Whether it involves your money or your talent, now more than ever it pays to diversify. In poetic words we read Solomon's advice for a world gone wrong — whether his or ours: "Cast your bread upon the waters, for you shall find it after many days" (Eccl. 11:1, JPS).

In the ordinary course of events, if you cast bread on waters of a lake or sea you most certainly will not find it after many days. It will be eaten up or sink to the bottom. But Solomon is giving a lesson in faith — you may catch, after many days, the fish that ate your bread.

Continuing, "Divide a portion into seven, yea, even into eight; for you know not what evil shall be upon the earth" (verse 2).

Develop your several talents, your

skills, and don't put all your financial resources into one basket. Diversification enables you to survive when first one thing and then another turns sour.

"If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth; and if a tree fall in the south, or in the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there shall it be" (verse 3).

You want to be where the rain falls and not on parched earth. You want to be where the tree falls. That means you prepare yourself to be there where the action is. You make yourself ready for the new opportunity.

Attitude of pioneering

It involves an attitude of pioneering, of fresh-mindedness, of faith in God, of being alert for new opportunities. No sitting in smoke-filled rooms or waiting drearily in lines for government handouts!

"He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. As you know not what is the way of the wind . . . even so you know not the work of God who doeth all things.

"In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening withhold not your hand; for you know not which shall prosper, whether this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good" (verses 4-6).

Never cultivate the negative attitude that nothing will turn out right. Develop yourself, study, practice, look for new opportunities, see the silver lining on the clouds.

Maybe, if you take the positive attitude Solomon had, more than one thing will turn out right!

Keep in contact with God through prayer.

Wives, be the kind of practical, farsighted woman described in Proverbs 31 (don't assume the only working wife is one who has a job outside the home).

Everybody, seek counsel from those who know of job opportunities, go to the library for information, avoid get-rich-quick schemes (Eccl. 5:9).

Above all, keep your heart in the Work of God. Be at church regularly. Share your problems with others. Bear each others' burdens. □

Slavery

(Continued from page 8)

for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage" (II Pet. 2:19).

Those who yield to sin are its slaves. Sin holds them in its clutches. Sin is their master. One experiences abject servitude under this merciless taskmaster.

In biblical symbolism, Egypt is pictured as a type of sin. Just as God led the ancient Israelites out of the oppressive physical slavery of Egypt, so has He provided a way out of the spiritual slavery of sin.

But in becoming free of the slavery of sin, we become slaves of another sort. Notice: Through Jesus Christ we can be made free from sin (Gal. 5:1). Through faith in Him we can come out of sin, just as "By faith he [Moses] forsook Egypt" (Heb. 11:27).

But we are still slaves! We have changed masters. No longer slaves to sin, we have become slaves of God!

As the apostle Paul wrote in Romans 6:18: "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants [slaves] of righteousness."

We have been bought with a price (I Cor. 7:23). That purchase price was the shed blood of Jesus Christ. As Christians we must now serve Him, yielding ourselves completely to the way He has set before us.

Our lives are no longer our own!

The yoke of slavery to sin is heavy. Those encumbered by it toil in a desolate wilderness.

But slavery to Jesus Christ is a beneficent form of bondage. "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light," Jesus declared (Matt. 11:30).

Keep that firmly in mind during the Passover season. Let's not make the mistake made by the ancient Israelites, whose outwardly hard life of wandering in the Sinai Desert made them forget that God delivered them from forced labor in Egypt (Ex. 16:3, Num. 11).

We must strive to maintain the right perspective and not allow ourselves to drift back into that from which we were once delivered — sin. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" (Gal. 5:1). □

What Really Happened in the Wilderness?

Of the millions of Israelites who left Egypt, more than a generation of them never reached the Promised Land. They were overthrown in the wilderness! Why?

By Clayton Steep

How did it happen? And what does it all have to do with you?

With signs and wonders and mighty miracles God delivered Israel out of Egypt. The awesome events foreshadowed how God would later deliver Christians from the bondage of this world.

The Israelites killed the Passover lamb to show how Christians must come under the blood of Jesus Christ, accepting His sacrifice as payment for sin.

Then the children of Israel kept the Days of Unleavened Bread to portray how Christians must go through a lifelong process of putting sin out of their lives.

On the last day of the Days of Unleavened Bread, God led Israel through the Red Sea and out of the reach of the Egyptians. Safe at last! Now all God had to do was take the Israelites directly northeast to the Promised Land.

But God didn't do that!

Instead, He led them *southeast* into a wilderness region. Why? Why didn't God take the Israelites to their inheritance by the shortest route possible? Why did the Israelites have to experience the rigors of a prolonged



must face problems — as well as the keys for successfully overcoming problems and qualifying to enter into the promised eternal inheritance.

The pillar of cloud and fire

From the start of their journeying, God led Israel. He accompanied them in a pillar of smoke by day and in a pillar of flame by night. Israel was to look to the pillar of fire or cloud for guidance and direction. When the cloud rested in one place, they rested also, “whether it were two days, or a month, or a year” (Num. 9:22).

But the Israelites were not to become attached to a location, for when the cloud moved, they had to pack up and move — even in the dark of night — for “whether it was by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed” (verse 21).

During the day the cloud sheltered the people from the heat of the desert sun. At night the fire gave warmth and illumination. Though the children of Israel sinned many times and provoked God, God did not forsake them in the wilderness. The pillar, showing His presence, stayed with them (Neh. 9:18-19).

All this was to show that we as Christians ought not to become attached to anything in this physical life. We should not set our hearts on material things. We must keep our

journey through a desolate wilderness?

The churches of this world have no adequate explanation. Likewise, they cannot explain why Christians must encounter rigorous testing, resist temptation, face persecution, endure trials and persevere in the wilderness of this world before inheriting eternal life.

But there is a direct connection. One exactly parallels the other. In fact, it is in the account of Israel's wandering in the wilderness that we find revealed the reason Christians

eyes on God and follow His leading.

When He says go, we go. When He says stop, we stop. God guides us safely even when we must travel in the dark night of deep trial and heavy testing.

God is with His people today as the pillar was with Israel by day and night "throughout all their journeys" (Ex. 40:38).

It was this very pillar of cloud and fire, though, which led Israel into the wilderness of trial and test! Let us understand why.

Why the trials?

God directed the children of Israel into the wilderness. Once there, however, they could have accomplished their journeying in that desolate region and entered into the Promised Land in less than two years. But they didn't.

You are probably familiar with the story of what happened when Israel was preparing to enter the land. Most of the spies who were sent to survey conditions in the territory Israel was about to inherit brought back an evil report. And the whole congregation of Israel murmured and wept (Num. 14:1).

"Would God we had died in this wilderness!" they lamented (verse 2). And God granted them their wish. They had to wander for another 37½ years, until all who were 20 years and older at the time of the rebellion perished in the wilderness.

Thus Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years.

The Bible uses the number 40 to signify a period of judgment or time of testing. The 40 years Israel spent in the wilderness before entering the Promised Land portrays the life of a Christian from repentance to the end of this mortal existence.

It is during this period that the "old man" of sin and rebellion must perish once and for all, because it cannot enter into the inheritance.

But exactly why must Christians experience this period of testing after accepting Christ's sacrifice for past sins? Here is what the churches in the world that do not teach obedience to God's laws cannot — dare not — explain. Here is why God allows Christians to be tried and tested. The truth is revealed in Deuteronomy 8.

At the end of Israel's wandering,

God spoke to the nation and said: "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, [why?] to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no" (verse 2).

That's the answer! God wants us to learn to obey His commandments — His laws of love, of giving and serving. He wants to prove us, so He knows that He can trust us to obey Him before we inherit immortality.

In the trials and temptations we face God is testing our dependability: Will we keep His commandments and laws no matter what?

Trials not only measure our conversion, they correct and perfect us. They strengthen our resolve to obey God in all situations. As verses 5 and 6 point out:

"Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee. [To what end? Read on!] Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him."

There is no other way for Christians to inherit the promises.

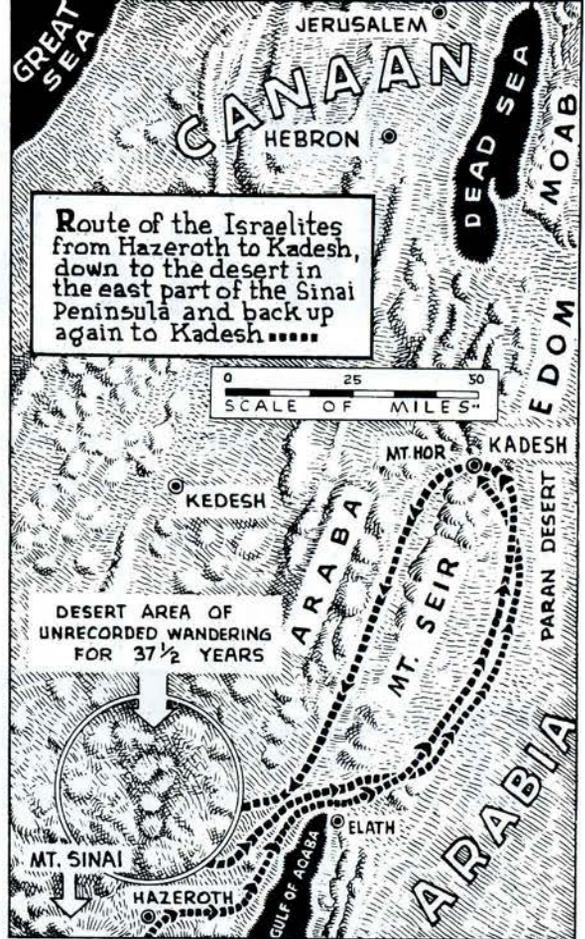
The lesson of the manna

Deuteronomy 8 not only reveals what is expected of us, it also contains an all-important key as to how to accomplish it. That key is found in the lesson of the manna.

In verse 3 God reminded the children of Israel that He "humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know."

Now why did God feed Israel with manna, a food never before heard of by human beings? He could have sent quail every day as He did in Exodus 16. Or He could have miraculously furnished vegetables or fruit or cereal.

But no, for 40 years God fed the Israelites with a strange substance. The Israelites name it "What's it?,"



which gives us the Hebrew word *manna*.

Similar to a small seed, manna was found lying on the ground early in the morning. Manna had to be gathered before the sun became hot or else it would melt. It could be prepared for eating in many ways, and there was a certain variation in its taste (Ex. 16:14, 31, Num. 11:7-8). In Psalm 78:24-25 manna is called "the corn of heaven" and "angels' food."

God nourished Israel with a supernaturally produced food that the Israelites could only obtain by strictly adhering to certain rules: gathering a specific quantity early in the morning, not letting any remain until the next day — except on the sixth day of the week, when twice as much was gathered in preparation for the Sabbath (Ex. 16).

Manna could not be obtained from any other source anywhere in the world. It was not of this world. And that was just the point.

The manna symbolized Jesus Christ. When the Jews of Jesus' day asked Him about manna, Jesus told them plainly: "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the

wilderness, and are dead. . . . I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever" (John 6:48-51).

But why did God feed Israel with this unusual food? Let's continue in Deuteronomy 8:3: It was that God "might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." That was the reason!

In the world people live mostly on the physical, material level. They spend their time and efforts laboring for material possessions, seeking physical goods and sensual pleasures. For most people life is little more than the physical. The Bible calls that living by bread alone.

That's not the way God wants His chosen people to live. Notice that God did not say, "Man shall not live by bread *at all*." He said, "by bread *alone*!" We have to have bread to exist. But procuring it should not be the most important goal in our lives.

We need material things. We even need relaxation and pleasure to be balanced personalities. But procuring these physically oriented elements should not be our first concern in life.

Obedience to God — serving God, living by His every word — must come first. When we do this, God will see that the physical is taken care of. That is what Jesus taught in Matthew 6. On our jobs, in our professions, in whatever we do, we ought to seek first, not to make money, not to obtain material things, but God's Kingdom, His will and righteousness (verse 33). Then God will provide food, raiment and other blessings (verses 25-32).

To demonstrate all this, God freed the children of Israel from the necessity of being preoccupied about physical sustenance.

God provided food to the full (Ps. 78:25). He was ever ready to supply water. He even saw to it that their clothing and footwear did not wear out (Deut. 29:5). As far as physical needs, "they lacked nothing" (Neh. 9:21).

The Israelites did not labor to cultivate or produce their bread. It was not by their efforts that water was had. Or that their clothing lasted. All

Israel had to do was to obey God's instructions — to live by every word that proceeded out of His mouth — as to how and when to gather the manna or obtain water. God provided the sustenance.

The bread from heaven

The Israelites lived — that is to say, they received physical life — from the supernaturally provided physical manna. Christians are to live — to receive spiritual life as well as guidance in material matters — from the supernaturally provided spiritual manna, the bread from heaven.

Jesus, as we have seen, is that bread. He is the Word of God by which we must live.

We must gather and eat Jesus Christ, the true manna, as He explained in the synagogue at Capernaum (John 6:51-58). He wasn't talking about cannibalism, as the Jews may have thought.

Rather, He referred to eating His flesh and drinking His blood once a year at the Passover (verse 54), and to devouring His words, His precepts, His teachings all year through (verse 63).

We should be assimilating Christ's teachings, making them a part of us as physical food becomes a part of us. "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me," Jesus declared (verse 57). This means Bible study, prayer and meditating — a quantity of spiritual food to be eaten each and every day, just as a measure of manna had to be gathered to be eaten each day.

We should ask ourselves, especially at this season of self-examination, if we are eating the manna that has been so abundantly sent from heaven for us. Are we gathering it, devouring it, living by it as though our lives depended upon it (which they do)?

Or is it collecting dust on the bookshelf? Or perhaps "breeding worms and stinking" in the lives of some who are not consuming the appropriate, full, daily measure of this wonderful, God-sent spiritual food (Ex. 16:20)?

Don't just nibble. Eat! Lots! "He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever," Jesus promised (John 6:58).

And drink freely of the water, too! It was not without reason that God led the Israelites into a parched desert area. He could have taken them

somewhere to a region with ample water. But He wanted them to feel the need for the water only He could supply.

While there was ample food every day in the form of manna, water was not regularly and automatically available. Time and again the people thirsted for it (Ex. 17:1, Num. 20:2, 21:5, Neh. 9:20). It was a test for them.

Instead of complaining, they should have asked, in faith, for water, just as we must continually thirst after and ask God for His Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13), because His Spirit is not supplied automatically. Whenever we ask in faith, though, the same Rock — Jesus Christ — who furnished water in the wilderness (I Cor. 10:4) will supply that Spirit to us (Phil. 1:19).

What not to do

In I Corinthians 10 the apostle Paul listed, as a warning to Christians at the Passover season, five specific sins Israel committed in the wilderness. Not that Israel didn't commit other sins, too, but five are mentioned in this chapter. They could all have been avoided had Israel really understood the daily lesson of the manna — that man should live by every word of God.

God's Spirit was working in the presence of the Israelites, as the miracles showed (Neh. 9:20). But the people were unconverted. They did not grasp what they were experiencing (Deut. 29:2-4). Why, then, did Israel go through the experiences in the wilderness? Why did they encounter the temptations?

I Corinthians 10:11 gives the answer. All these things are examples for us — we Christians — to learn from! The five sins Paul lists in I Corinthians 10 — sins that caused many to be "overthrown in the wilderness" (verse 5) — are five examples for us of what *not* to do (verse 6).

Briefly, the sins were:

1) *Lust* (verse 6). Only a year or so after the Exodus Israel had already become tired of manna (Num. 11:6), just as some Christians at times become tired of Bible study, prayer and meditation. The Israelites asked for "meat for their lust" (Ps. 78:18, 30). They wanted the food of the world — the meat, cucumbers, mel-

ons, leeks, onions, garlic (Num. 11:4-5) — the things that titillate and excite the senses.

"Enough of this manna!" said they. "Enough of having to live by every word of God!" Instead, they wanted "their own desire" (Ps. 78:29).

Coming from heavenly sources, manna was a perfect food nutritionally. But tastewise it may have been a bit bland to the Israelites, varying from the taste of oil to that of honey (Ex. 16:31, Num. 11:8). At last the Israelites came to despise it (Num. 21:5). As a steady diet, manna just did not appeal to the senses like normal, earthly food does.

In the same way, television, movies, entertainment, material pursuits — anything offered by the world — may seem more attractive and interesting to the senses than does spiritual food. And if we are not careful, we may be guilty of seeking to satisfy our physical lusts at the expense of our spiritual well-being.

2) *Idolatry* (I Cor. 10:7). The apostle Paul here specifically refers to the time Israel worshiped a golden calf in the midst of riotous merry-making (Ex. 32).

Christians rarely have a problem when it comes to bowing before literal idol gods or leering images. But notice which part of the story in Exodus Paul emphasizes to Christians as idolatry: "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."

Activities such as these can definitely become idolatry, even for a Christian! It is, once again, a question of pursuing the wrong kind or wrong amount of physical pleasures and entertainment to the neglect of seeking to know God better. That is idolatry — putting something before God.

3) *Fornication* (I Cor. 10:8). For a Christian this could involve physical or mental wrongdoing (Matt. 5:27-29). The case Paul mentioned, found in Numbers 25, occurred after nearly 40 long years of being led by God in the wilderness. Had Israel comprehended what their diet of manna symbolized all those years, they could have avoided this sin.

4) *Tempting God* (I Cor. 10:9). A primary meaning of the word *tempt* is to "try sorely." Israel tempted God by sorely trying His patience over a period of 40 years (Heb. 3:9). Chris-

tians likewise may tempt God by trying His patience.

But the word *tempt* can also be used in the sense of luring or enticing to commit some act. This was Satan's approach in Matthew 4:6-7.

It was Israel's approach in Exodus 17, where the Israelites said, in effect, "If God doesn't give us water when and how we want it, He is not with us" (verses 2, 7). It was putting God on the spot, backing Him into a corner, trying to dictate when and how He must act.

To tempt God is to try to limit Him (Psalm 78:41) to a certain course of action that He "must" (according to us) take.

We need to be careful not to tempt God by deciding when and how He "must" act — when and how He "must" heal us if we are sick, for example. Nor should we try to force God's hand by eating the wrong kind of food or breaking other health laws with the attitude that "If I get sick God will just have to heal me."

When we are on the streets we should not assume God has to protect us if we break the traffic laws. Another way some tempt God is by withholding tithes and offerings, with the reasoning: "God must bless me *first*. Then I will tithe and give offerings."

God does not work that way. He is in charge and He will do things His way. We must learn to submit and rejoice in His decisions.

5) *Murmuring* (I Cor. 10:10). One of the ways Israel continually tested God's long-suffering was by constant murmuring, grumbling, complaining and griping (Ex. 17:3, Num. 14:2, 27, 16:41). Those who persist in such an attitude are doomed to destruction (Num. 21:4-6).

Strangers and pilgrims

"Now all these things," summarized the apostle Paul, "happened unto them [the children of Israel] for ensamples [to us]: and they are written for our admonition" (I Cor. 10:11).

We ought to think often of the Israelites in the wilderness and how their experiences parallel our experiences in our Christian lives. Of course, since we have the Holy Spirit, we should not give in to sin as they did. Our attitude should be right.

Our reactions to trials and problems should be positive.

God is bringing us to a good land (Deut. 8:7). The experiences we are going through are preparing us for a marvelous inheritance. Any other goal we could ever have is secondary. Compared to our great destiny, material possessions and wealth are unimportant.

True, we may sometimes feel dissatisfied with our lot in life. Our home may not really be the one we'd like to have. Perhaps we'd like to be in a nicer neighborhood, enjoy finer clothing, better means of transportation, more elegant things, a more beautiful body. Certainly it is good to improve our status and circumstances as we have opportunity. And we should be thankful for what we have.

But how much do these things really matter? How long are they going to last? Life — this journey through the wilderness — is temporary. We are "strangers and pilgrims" on earth (I Pet. 2:11).

Our dwellings are temporary. Our houses and apartments — yes, our bodies, likewise — all are temporary dwellings, as were the tents Israel abode in. So what if you must sojourn in a tent that is a little plain or faded or patched or sagging in the center, and you can't do anything about it? It will get you to where you are headed.

One day, before you know it, this journey in the wilderness, with all of its trials and tests, will be over. You will take down and fold up your tent for the last time (see II Peter 1:13-14, Moffatt version). And if you have been faithful, you will enter into the promised inheritance.

As a radiant, immortal spirit being, looking back at this temporary, often problem-filled physical existence, you will then be able to praise the merciful and loving God "who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, who fed you in the wilderness with manna which your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, [Why? For what reason?] *to do you good in the end*" (Deut. 8:15-16, Revised Standard Version)! □

Resurrection

(Continued from page 1)

FOREVER! Your transgression of GOD'S WAY of life has not only brought unhappiness and suffering to you, it has *cut you off* from all contact with your Maker! You are a mere mortal. The penalty hanging over you is DEATH — and the most certain thing in life is that all shall DIE! You have no power to impart to *yourself* eternal life. And you are *cut off* from God the Father, the GIVER of eternal LIFE!

But God so loved this world that He gave His only begotten Son, that if you believe on HIM you shall not, after all, PERISH, but have the GIFT of everlasting LIFE (John 3:16)! That can only come THROUGH CHRIST!

But HOW? Jesus Christ was CHANGED from the divine Word of God to mortal human FLESH for the purpose of DEATH. He, ONLY, of all humans, lived without sin. He said, "I have *kept* my Father's commandments" (John 15:10).

When He shed His precious blood — when He GAVE His life — He was not paying the penalty of HIS sins, for He never sinned. He was paying YOUR penalty FOR YOU! — in your stead! — the penalty you incurred by disobedience.

So now, if and when you really REPENT of your transgressions, and when you BELIEVE, not only in Christ, but also His GOSPEL, your penalty stands PAID IN FULL — you are RECONCILED to God — you have ACCESS to God the Father!

You are now JUSTIFIED. Your guilt is wiped CLEAN — *up to THAT moment!* You are UNDER GRACE — that is, undeserved PARDON for *past* transgressions.

But that GRACE gives you *no license to continue* in sin! As the apostle Paul wrote: "What shall we say then? Shall we CONTINUE in sin [transgressing God's LAW], that grace may abound? GOD FORBID" (Rom. 6:1-2). Justification refers only to a guilty PAST!

But *now* where do you stand? Are you now automatically already SAVED? You most certainly are not! *Be NOT DECEIVED!* The DEATH of Christ does *not* impart ETERNAL LIFE!

You are NOT finally SAVED by the death of Christ. You are merely JUSTIFIED — your PAST GUILT removed — reconciled to GOD! You are merely PREPARED so that you CAN be saved. You now have access to GOD from whom eternal life comes!

What the death of Christ means

The BLOOD of Christ does NOT finally SAVE you, and had Christ REMAINED dead you would have *no salvation* — NEVER could you have eternal life!

HERE'S the glorious TRUTH! *Here's* the point I want you to grasp: You are finally SAVED — you receive eternal LIFE — *by the* RESURRECTION of Christ — from the LIVING Christ, not a dead Savior!

It's in YOUR BIBLE. Turn to it — SEE IT WITH YOUR OWN EYES! Turn to Romans 5:8-10: "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now *justified by his blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were *reconciled to God by the* DEATH of his Son, much more, being reconciled, *we shall be saved* BY HIS LIFE."

There it is! Do you see? Do you comprehend? We are *forgiven*, JUSTIFIED OF PAST GUILT, reconciled to the Father by the DEATH of Christ — but we SHALL be SAVED, not by His death, but by HIS LIFE! Yes, BY HIS RESURRECTION!

In I Corinthians 5:7-8 the apostle Paul laid down the commandment for the CHURCH: "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: *Therefore let us KEEP THE FEAST.*"

The original TRUE Church that Jesus built kept the PASSOVER and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, NOT Easter. The Passover was the MEMORIAL of the DEATH of Christ, observed on its anniversary, picturing our JUSTIFICATION from past sins — our being RECONCILED TO GOD. *Therefore*, as Paul said, let us PUT SIN OUT OF OUR LIVES, for that's what the Festival of Unleavened Bread was given by God to picture to HIS CHURCH!

Also, *this* Festival of GOD pictured the RISEN, RESURRECTED CHRIST! And so, as CHRIST died for us and ROSE again, the people of God are instructed, "Likewise reck-

on ye *also yourselves* to be dead indeed UNTO SIN, but ALIVE unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" — yes, through Christ's LIFE (Rom. 6:11).

Saved by His resurrection

CHRIST'S resurrection makes possible OUR resurrection to immortal life in the very divine FAMILY of God — He is only the *firstborn* of many brethren! Your gift of ETERNAL LIFE results NOT from the DEATH of Christ, but from HIS RESURRECTION!

Suppose Jesus Christ had remained dead in His tomb. Do you suppose that, in that case, your faith in HIS BLOOD — His DEATH — could have SAVED you? If you do, you'd be trusting in a FALSE HOPE! It's time we realize the TRUTH!

Notice again — read this in YOUR BIBLE: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching VAIN, and *your faith* is also VAIN . . . if Christ be NOT RAISED, your faith is VAIN . . . Then they also which are fallen asleep [that is, DEAD] *in Christ* are PERISHED" — unless Christ ROSE from the dead (I Cor. 15:14-18)!

Do you grasp the wonderful truth? Christ is not a *dead* Savior! He ROSE from the dead! He is our LIVING Savior!

But He was DEAD! He rose from DEATH — not from LIFE! It was the EVERLIVING FATHER who raised Him — who imparted eternal LIFE to Him!

Jesus Christ became mortal man for the very PURPOSE of *death* — to pay the PENALTY — DEATH — for you and for me. He was mortal. He died. You are mortal. You shall die. And there is NO immortal life — and no possibility of it — in mortal man. GOD ALONE possesses inherent immortality! God *is* life — life inherent — life eternal! God alone has life to IMPART! We can have it only as HIS GIFT!

No immortal souls

The Scriptures do NOT teach that the soul that sins shall go on living forever, but "the soul that sinneth, IT SHALL DIE" (Ezek. 18:4).

And ALL have sinned! YOU have sinned! Millions of people today have learned to HATE other people. People learn to HATE in time of war. Do

THEY have eternal life inherent — do THEY have an immortal soul — is ANY eternal life inherent in them?

LISTEN: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (I John 3:15).

GOD'S WORD says plainly such a person does NOT have an immortal soul! To our first parent, God said, "DUST *thou* art, and unto dust shalt THOU return" (Gen. 3:19). He didn't say "your body that you live in" — He said "DUST THOU art."

YOUR Bible says man is MORTAL, but nowhere does it say he is immortal. Man is mortal flesh, subject to corruption — DEATH! All have sinned, and the penalty is DEATH for all ETERNITY — eternal DEATH!

But in John 4:24 it is written, "GOD is a SPIRIT." And again, "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself" (John 5:26).

Notice also I John 5:11-12: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

Christ Jesus is a LIVING Savior! He DIED to pay the DEATH penalty for YOU — that your past guilt might be erased! God RAISED Him from the dead, to make a resurrection to ETERNAL LIFE possible for YOU. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the LIFE" (John 11:25).

Paul wrote, "But now is Christ RISEN from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (I Cor. 15:20).

Why the Gospel of the Kingdom?

But His resurrection made possible NOT ONLY *your* personal salvation and mine, but the resurrection of this dying WORLD!

For Christ was raised from the dead to ascend to the throne of God the Father in heaven to be GLORIFIED — to RECEIVE for Himself the KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD — and He promised that if He *went*, He would COME AGAIN — coming this time as KING of kings and LORD of lords, to RULE THE WORLD with the supernatural power of God — to bring us the happy WORLD TOMORROW! Jesus' GOSPEL was the GOOD NEWS of the

Kingdom of God — the REIGN of God — WORLD RULE!

The CONDITIONS to entering that glorious and GLORIFIED Kingdom are these: "REPENT" — repent of YOUR ways, YOUR thoughts, the ways of this world, the ways that have seemed RIGHT to a man, but are contrary to God's perfect and holy LAW — and "BELIEVE." Yes, believe the GOSPEL — believe on CHRIST as personal Savior.

The inspired Peter pointed the way: "REPENT, and BE BAPTIZED," he said, "... and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy [Spirit]" (Acts 2:38). That's the WAY to salvation — the WAY into eternal inheritance in the KINGDOM OF GOD.

At the RESURRECTION of the JUST — at Christ's coming — it is proclaimed: "The kingdoms [the *governments*] of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his CHRIST; and HE shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15).

If WE repent, believe and are BEGOTTEN of God now — if we OVERCOME and *grow* in grace and knowledge — we shall sit WITH Christ on His throne — we shall be given power over the nations to RULE them with a rod of iron, as kings and priests under Christ the KING of kings.

And now one glimpse into that RESURRECTED world — the glorious, happy WORLD TOMORROW — lying at PEACE, at last:

"But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.

"And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

"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" (Mic. 4:1-3).

GOD SPEED THAT HAPPY DAY! Let us pray, "THY Kingdom come." □

Appearance

(Continued from page 18)

promise in Matthew 6:30, and of your faithfulness in seeking His Kingdom first.

If you do, God will hear and answer in remarkable ways. Also, don't hesitate or be ashamed to counsel with God's ministers about problems in this area.

Here are some simple guidelines you should follow at all times — not just on the Sabbath:

You should bathe daily. You should wear appropriate clothing for the occasion. Your hair should be clean and well groomed.

God commands that men should have short hair and women long hair (I Cor. 11:14-15), yet some men in the Church have longer hair than some women.

If you do not know how to dress appropriately for God's Sabbath, look for good examples in your congregation. The ministers of God's Church and their wives generally set a good example. They have been taught at Ambassador College about proper grooming. Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong has instructed the ministers on many occasions about this important subject, and he himself sets a high standard for all of us to follow.

God's way is to change, to work hard and improve in every way, physically and spiritually. Are you following this way? Are you improving in your grooming? Do you wear proper clothing for each occasion and keep yourself clean?

If you are a husband, you should supply a sufficient amount of money or materials for clothing for your wife and children. Wives, familiarize yourself with Proverbs 31:19, 21-22, 24, which shows that a good wife will be supplying appropriate quality clothing for her family. Grow toward the perfect example of Jesus Christ. Strive for balance.

The next time you appear before Jesus Christ in His services, show your respect, admiration and love for Him by dressing and preparing properly for the occasion. Be clean and wear your best appropriate clothing cleaned and pressed. Glorify God in your body! □

SIN'S POWER

(Continued from page 5)

keep in daily contact with God.

Our spiritual strength is thus renewed each day (II Cor. 4:16). If we walk closely with God, God will give us the help to conquer.

- *Meditation.* David found that meditating on God's law day and night was one of his greatest sources of strength: "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation" (Ps. 119:97-99).

Meditation, coupled with the power of God's Holy Spirit, opens for us new realms of understanding. Meditation is a process of assimilating the Word of God, the bread of life. The more our minds are filled with spiritual truth, the less room there will be for Satan to enter.

- *Sermons and Bible studies.* God's ministry is commissioned to feed God's flock (John 21:15-17). God's ministers have been specially trained to expound and enlarge the meaning of the Scriptures. When we attend services with a keen desire to learn God's truth, we will discover rich gems of knowledge — tools of spiritual warfare — we could never find on our own (Rom. 10:14).

- *Fellowship with God's people.* Frequent fellowship with brethren of like faith provides a wealth of spiritual food and motivation. Hebrews 3:13 commands, "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

We must always strive to keep our fellowship and conversation positive, edifying and encouraging each other at every opportune moment (Gal. 6:1-2, 6, 10). By mingling with brethren who are close to God and filled with His Spirit, we will absorb much spiritual strength (Rom. 1:11-12).

- *God's Holy Spirit.* The bottom line to winning the victory over sin and Satan lies with God's Holy Spirit, where we get our true power for battle (Eph. 3:16-20, Rom. 8:1-4). Ephesians 5:18 commands us to "be filled with the Spirit."

In every prayer, we should ask God to give us a renewed supply of His Spirit. When we are filled with God's Spirit, there remains no place for sin to enter or Satan to work.

Starve sin and Satan

The secret to conquering our sinful nature is to cut off its "food supply." In other words, we must starve it to death. To the degree that we accomplish this feat — starving our sinful nature, but feeding the spiritual — we will overcome and win the victory over sin.

Here are steps to overcoming sin:

- *Bring every thought into captivity.* Paul exhorts us to bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:5). This requires a high degree of discipline.

Guard the door of your mind and examine every thought. Allow nothing to enter except what is pure and clean in God's eyes (Phil. 4:8). Follow the lead of God's Spirit and develop a right conscience. Don't rationalize with temptation, but crush it immediately. Keep up your defenses at all times (Prov. 16:32) and look to God for help.

- *Flee from temptation.* We are commanded to "Flee fornication" (I Cor. 6:18). Jesus Christ revealed the urgency of getting away from sin in His instruction to pluck out our eye or cut off our right hand if they tempt us to sin (Matt. 5:29-30). Of course, He was using a powerful figure of speech; He did not mean we should literally cut off our hand or pluck out our eye. Our hands and eyes only obey our mind and do not by themselves lead us into sin.

Colossians 3:5 shows what Jesus was literally telling us to cut out. We should either remove ourselves immediately from the scene of temptation or take whatever means are necessary to choke off the power of temptation's influence.

Do you take a second or third look at something or some situation that you know to be wrong? If so, you are feeding your sinful nature and playing into the hands of the enemy. Grab yourself by the collar and run as far away as possible! Don't look back, leer or linger — quickly cast out the wrong thought.

- *Control your natural drives.* God gave us our five senses to enjoy

the good things of life in a balanced, wholesome way. But when we indulge them to excess, the power of sin begins to exert itself and take over. God commands us to be temperate, or moderate, in all things (II Pet. 1:6). Master yourself and never allow physical lusts to take preeminence.

- *Control your temper.* Giving vent to uncontrolled anger is one of the surest ways to let the devil find access into your mind. "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil" (Eph. 4:26-27).

Determine to keep a cool head and a steady disposition. Try to anticipate problem situations and avoid or neutralize them. The key is to remain close to God so that, with His Holy Spirit, you can constantly be alert and use the power of instant self-control.

- *Love not the world.* This society is the devil's playground — a carnival-like atmosphere designed to arouse unholy lusts and distractions for a Christian. Even though we must live in this sinful world, we should remember that we are God's people and not be drawn into the world's wicked practices (Rom. 12:2).

John wrote: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth ever" (I John 2:15-17).

Clearly, the battle lines are drawn. We must resist and reject the lures and lusts of the world and Satan as though our lives depended on it. For, spiritually speaking, they do — eternally!

Sin is more sinister and pervasive than just an act of disobedience against God's law. Sin is a *power* or law that works in our very members. Overcoming, then, is the process of nourishing God's nature within ourselves and starving human nature. This calls for constant self-discipline and making use of God's power.

By God's power, we are enabled to overcome. And, with God's power, we will! □

The Resurrection Was Not on Sunday!

-But Could You Prove That to a Skeptic?

- What was the only sign Christ gave to prove He was the Messiah?

- True or false: In the Greek language, in which the New Testament was written, the expression "three days and three nights" means three *periods*, either of day or night.

- If commentators and higher critics admitted Christ was in the

tomb three days and three nights, which of their traditions would collapse?

- True or false: The crucifixion week included two Sabbaths.

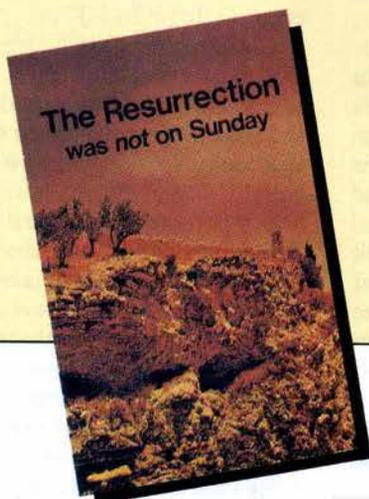
- The day on which the crucifixion occurred was called the "preparation day" for which Sabbath?

- True or false: Christ was crucified on the Passover.

- True or false: There were no eyewitnesses to Christ's resurrection.

- True or false: The resurrection occurred, not at sunrise, but in the late afternoon near sunset.

- Mark 16:9 says Christ "was risen early the first day of the week." Can you explain why this doesn't prove that Christ was resurrected on Sunday?



Are you able to correctly answer all the questions above? Why not get out and reread our booklet, *The Resurrection Was Not on Sunday*, before the coming Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread? Or if you have not read it, why not send today for a *free* copy? Just use the literature request card inside this issue or write to the *Good News* office at the address nearest you.

