

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

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This monthly religious journal is published for the benefit of the Church of God universally. It is our supreme purpose to reach the world for Christ through the printed page. Our burden is to reveal the truth of God's Word to all mankind, to expose sin and error, war against apostasy, and to eradicate the longstanding traditions of men that have no biblical foundations.

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

- A personal God (John 4:24)
- A divine Christ (John 1:1, 14)
- An infallibly inspired Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- Salvation from sin (Matt. 1:21)
- The new birth (John 3:3, 5-7)
- A holy life (Luke 1:73-75; Titus 2:12)
- Sanctification (1 Thess. 5:23)
- Unity of God's people (John 17:21, Eph. 4)
- Divine, physical healing (James 5:14-16)
- The ordinances (Matt. 28:19-20; John 13; 1 Cor. 11:23, 34)
- Eternal life (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:43)
- The Trinity (1 John 5:7, 8)

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

- Jesus organized it (Matt. 16:18)
- On a good foundation (Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 3:11)
- Christ governs it (Eph. 1:22-23; Isa. 9:6)
- God admits members (1 Cor. 12:13-18)
- Sin puts you out of it (Rom. 11:22; Ex. 32:33)
- The saved only are members (John 15:2-6)
- Membership is offered to all (Rev. 22:17)
- Final rewards (Rev. 20:12-15; 21:3-4; 22:14)
- Bible name of the Church (Acts 20:28; Gal. 1:13; John 17:11)

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Guest Editorial

The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks

A Time Line to the End of Old Israel as the People of God

Part 3 of 4

The Seventieth Week

Daniel 9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

In our last study we found the true delineation of the sixty-nine weeks, a period of time from B. C. 457 to A. D. 26. Most religious advocates will agree with the time reckoning up to this point; however, the confusion arises concerning what

occurred at the conclusion of the sixty-nine weeks. What followed the sixty-ninth week? According to dispensational teachers, the seventieth week has not occurred yet. The noted dispensationalist, H. A. Ironside, said this: *"These things were not fulfilled because Israel did not accept the Messiah, and so God postponed the seventieth week until a future time. Between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks, we have a great parentheses, which has now lasted over nineteen hundred years. The seventieth week has been postponed by God himself. The moment Messiah died on the Cross, the prophetic clock stopped. There has not been a tick upon that clock for nineteen centuries."*

Let us examine the Scripture to see if that idea is accurate. Verse 26 states, "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off." Now, think for a moment. What is after the threescore and two weeks? We found in verse 25 the seven weeks, or forty-nine years, were from B. C. 457 to B. C. 408. Immediately following the seven weeks were sixty-two weeks, or four hundred thirty-four years, in direct chronological succession.

Notice that there were the seven weeks, and then the sixty-two weeks. The sixty-two weeks were after the seven, so it was actually after sixty-nine weeks. After the sixty-ninth week, Messiah was cut off. What was after the sixty-ninth week? It was the seventieth week. Had the seventieth week been postponed and not arrived yet, then Messiah could not have been cut off. I hope that you can see the folly of dispensationalists' false teachings.

Our lesson text states, "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off." I repeat, had the seventieth week not come, then Christ could not have been cut off. Had He not been cut off, then He could not have died for man's sins. Had He not died for man's sins, then we could not have salvation. No

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Acts 15:12 Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:

14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build

again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

The Rebuilding of David's Tabernacle



Brother Roger L. Decker

David Was a Type of Christ

I want to speak to you on verse 16, which reads, "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up." It is a well-established fact, and I am sure most Bible students know, that King David was a type of Jesus Christ in many ways. Both Jesus and David were prophets, priests, and kings. Speaking of David, Acts 2:30 says, "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne." There David was called a prophet. In the Old Testament,

1 Kings 1:31 reads, "Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let my lord king David live for ever."

David was also a priest. In 2 Samuel, Chapter 6, we can read that David filled the office of a high priest. In this chapter we find that David had just gotten news that stirred him. Verses 12-19 state: "And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obededom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obededom into the city of David with gladness. And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he

sacrificed oxen and fatlings. And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

"And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he

blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed every one to his house."

David received word that the ark of the covenant was in the house of Obbedom and that his house was being blessed. Everything Obbedom owned was under the blessings of God. Again, verse 12 says, "And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obbedom, and all that pertaineth unto him [why?], because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obbedom into the city of David with gladness."

It is true yet today that the house that has the presence of God is blessed. Why are some homes not being blessed today? They have lost the presence of God. We read in Acts 8:5-8: "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria [Philip was a deacon in the church, not one of the Apostles], and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city." There is joy where the presence of God is.

Again, 2 Samuel 6:13-14 reads: "And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings. And David danced before the LORD with all his might [I believe that we all need to worship God with all our might]; and David was girded with a linen ephod." These verses say there was sacrifice and joy, and David danced before the Lord. That was not the kind of dancing that is out in the world; he was dancing before the Lord.

David Served as a High Priest, Yet Became as a Servant

Verse 14 tells of one thing that David did that pertained to the office of a high priest. He was girded with a linen ephod. What was a linen ephod? It was a garment worn by the priesthood, especially the high priest. Speaking of the call and the appointment of Aaron who became a high priest, Exodus 28:3-4 says: "And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office."

Verse 15 tells us there was shouting and the sound of a trumpet. The people were really excited because the presence of God was back in their midst. We read in 2 Samuel 6:20-23: "Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself! And David said unto Michal, It was before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD. And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour. Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death."

When you read verse 20, you can see what stirred Michal. It was not so much the dancing. She said, "How glorious was the king of Israel to

day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!" What does that verse mean? It simply means that he took off his kingly robe and became as one of the people of Israel; in other words, he went right down to the level of a servant. A critic was standing by who believed that it was put-on and that David had lowered himself to the place of a servant. Michal said that he "shamelessly uncovereth himself," as if to say, "How could a king stoop that low?" Jesus Christ condescended to you and me; He came right down to where we live.

When there is rejoicing, rest assured, there is going to be a critic who will say that it was a big sham or that it was emotion. Well, what if it was emotion, as long as it was emotion that glorified God? People get emotional at sports events. What is wrong with getting emotional for the Lord?

A Better Covenant

David performed all the duties that pertained to the priesthood: he gave burnt offerings, peace offerings, and blessed the people. When the ark was returned, it was not placed in a tabernacle or a temple, but it was placed in the midst of a tent. Second Samuel 6:18-19 says: "And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men [the women were even allowed to partake of worship; they were allowed to be blessed], to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed every one to his house."

There was no separation between male and female and children. David blessed all the people. He let them all partake of the bread, the offerings, and the peace offerings.

What does that tell you? For a moment the Mosaic worship was suspended. In the law of worship under the Mosaic Law pertaining to the temple and the tabernacle, women had no part of it. We can see a type of Jesus Christ in these Scriptures. The ark was set right in the midst of the tent with all of Israel, and all of Israel had part in that worship.

Again, verse 19 reads, "And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed every one to his house." David, being a good father, returned to bless his household. A good father yet has worship and is concerned for his family. In Matthew 18:20 Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Many types are in the Word of God, but in those verses of Scripture you can see that tent with the ark, and David as the servant of all the people. You can see that as a type of the church. In the New Testament dispensation, the Mosaic Law has not been suspended for only a time; it has been suspended forever. We are under a better covenant, or a better testament. Things are better in the new covenant than they were under the old.

The Bible says in Hebrews 7:22, "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." We have better promises. Hebrews 8:6 says, "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." We have a better Sacrifice. Saint, our Sacrifice cleaned us up from sin entirely. Sinner friend, you do not have to sin anymore. You can be clean from the top of your head to the soles of your feet, within and without. Hebrews 9:23 reads, "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be

purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." Everything is better in the New Testament dispensation, and it keeps getting better, because we have the best.

The Bible says the tabernacle of David is fallen down. Acts 15:16 says, "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle [or the tent] of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up." God was saying that He was going to set this one up, and it is not going to fall down. David passed away, and his son Solomon succeeded him on the throne. Solomon built a great temple, and the ark was taken from the tabernacle of David and placed in the holiest of holies in the temple. Therefore, the tabernacle of David was no longer used for worship, and it fell down. There was no need for it.

A Time of Transition

When God said He was going to build up that which had fallen down, He was letting us know that He is no longer interested in the old Jewish worship going on in Israel. He is not interested in continual sacrifices being offered day in and day out. God has left that house desolate. God moved upon the Prophet Amos to prophesy of a time when David's tabernacle would be rebuilt. The Prophet Amos said in Amos 9:11, "In that day [speaking of the Gospel Day, the day of Jesus Christ] will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old."

In Acts, Chapter 15, you can read of a controversy going on. Verse 1 tells us what the problem was: "And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." A clash occurred when they met with the Apostles. They ran into Paul and Barnabas, and Paul was a

debater, such a debater that he would go into the synagogues on the Sabbath day and talk concerning things of the Law. Why did he know so much about the Law? He sat at the feet of Gamaliel; therefore, he was well versed in the Law.

Some Jewish converts thought it was necessary to be circumcised to be saved. Their attitude seemed to be that the Christian faith was inferior to the Mosaic Law. They believed that the Christian faith only perfected the Mosaic Law, but that one still had to continue the practice of circumcision and the ceremonial part of the Law. They were not doing away with the Christian faith, because some of them were converts; yet they did not believe that one could be saved and not be circumcised.

Acts 15:2 reads, "When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question." However, in verse 12 we find, "Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them." There was yet a problem with some Jewish converts accepting the Gentiles. However, this was not the only problem in the morning-time church. You can read of problems in many areas in the Acts of the Apostles concerning the Jews accepting the fact that God condescended to the Gentiles.

The Apostles came together to settle the question. Remember, they were still in a transition period from the Law to grace and Truth. The people did not accept all the changes overnight. Nevertheless, when those Apostles met together to discuss the matter, they did not meet to throw out another Apostle. They met together to discuss the Law. Still, there was some disputing going on.

The Apostles came together to settle the matter. Breaking in at Acts

15:6 we read, "And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter." Now, that is the reason they came together. It was not for a ministerial meeting, but only to consider this matter. Verse 7 continues, "And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe."

What was Peter talking about? He was referring to the incident down at Cornelius' house. God sent Peter down to Cornelius' house. Why did He choose Peter? He was the most prejudiced among the Apostles. God chose Peter so that he could see the Holy Spirit poured out upon the Gentiles.

Purifying Their Hearts by Faith

Let us read Acts 15:7-9 again: "And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." Notice that Peter did not say "purifying their hearts by the Holy Ghost," but rather "purifying their hearts by faith."

Read verses 8-9 again: "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." Why? The just shall live by faith. Peter said in verses 10-11: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? [In other words, he was saying, 'We were unable to live holy and consistently

under the Mosaic Law. Why are you trying to put the Law back on us? We know that the Law was a yoke of bondage. Why are you trying to bring bondage to the people?'] But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they."

Verses 12-17 read: "Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, [James was going right back to the prophecy. The Jews from Judea definitely followed prophecy and the Law; that is what the controversy was over.] After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."

What was James talking about? He was taking them right back to the tabernacle (or the tent) of David, when David served all of Israel. He was letting them know that God was going to build it up again, but this time it was going to be for whosoever will, not just for the Jew. He was talking about building up the Church of God. James mentioned that God was going to return in the form of Jesus Christ and rebuild the tabernacle of David, and he was going to set it up.

The tabernacle of David was a break from Mosaic worship, and that is what God wanted to build, not rites and rituals and ceremonies. He was going to build a tabernacle that would reach beyond the borders of Israel, even to the residue of man. What is the residue of man? It is

what is left. The word *residue* means "the remnant." This time the tabernacle of David would not be set up for only a time, but it would be until Jesus comes again. Why? Because God was going to set it up. He made provision for the residue of man, regardless of who he is, whether he is a Jew or a Gentile; it is for whosoever will. The Gospel reaches out to every individual.

When the ark was brought back to Jerusalem, the people of Israel had great joy in having God back in their midst. Likewise, when an individual who has been away from God returns to Father's house, he experiences great joy in having the presence of God again. When David had the ark brought back to Jerusalem, there was such great joy that David served the entire house of Israel—the men, the women, and the children. When David was girded with a linen ephod, what work was he doing? He was a type of Jesus Christ, and that tent (David's tabernacle) was a type of the Church of God. Jesus Christ, being our High Priest serves each of us, or whosoever will—Jew or Gentile, black or white. No matter what your nationality is, Christ reaches beyond the borders of Israel. He is rebuilding the tabernacle of David.

The Word of God excites me. It is wonderful to see what God did back in the days of David of old, and then it is even more thrilling that He built that again. God set it up; it was not left to another people. Daniel stated in Daniel 2:44, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." It is an everlasting kingdom.

"All Things Are Now Ready"

Just as David served the whole house of Israel then, today God has a table spread where all may come and be fed. Luke 14:16-17 states:

"Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready."

"All things" takes in any need that an individual might have when he comes to the Lord's table. If you need salvation, all things are ready. If you need some things worked out, all things are ready. If you need the devil rebuked, all things are ready. If you need healing for your body, all things are ready. It is a great supper, and all are bidden to come; all can come, because Jesus died for the sins of the whole world.

This is a great supper! No one has seen a supper like this one. When David served the people in Israel, he did not serve the whole camp of Israel; he served only those who were present that day. I am sure that David did not have enough food in that tent to feed all of Israel, but this great supper has enough food to feed whosoever will come, not just a few Jews, but the Gentiles as well.

You may ask, "What does the Bible mean when it says *the Gentiles*?" You were a Gentile before you were saved, but now as a child of God, you are a spiritual Jew. God is not dealing with literal nations now. You need to get your mind off literal Israel over in Palestine. God is not blessing literal Israel. If someone in Israel wants to get saved, that person has to get saved the same as a gang leader in Chicago would have to get saved. In this New Testament dispensation, God has no more provision for the literal Jew than He does for those in the slums and the boweries of our nation's cities. The invitation is for whosoever will come. The just shall live by faith. God sets them up and puts them down.

First Samuel 2:8 says, "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and he hath set the

world upon them." The Lord sets them up on high; and if they get too high, He puts them down again.

The Scripture says "a certain man made a great supper." This supper is so great that it will feed the whole world. On that table is something for every need of mankind, but look what happened. When individuals were bidden, they made excuses. Jesus said none of those who have excuses would taste of His supper.

Friend, if you are going to receive help from God, you might as well take all the excuses you have and dump them in the trash can, because God is no respecter of persons. He would not accept the excuses in that day, and He is not going to accept them in this day. You cannot use the excuse that your husband or your wife is not saved. You cannot get by with the excuse that you cannot serve God because of your job. If that is the case, you need to quit that job, and God will help you to get a better one so that you can serve Him. You may try to use the excuse, "I can't serve God because my wife would never go to church." Then you ought to go without her. Or you may say, "Well, I can't serve God because my husband won't serve God, and I do not have a way to get to church." If you will serve God, He will make a way for you. All things are now ready at this great supper. Everything you need is ready.

In the parable that Jesus told of the great supper, we read of several excuses that were made. One man said that he married a wife and could not come. Friend, if marrying a wife keeps you from this great supper, you would be better off being a bachelor and dying as an old bachelor. Young person, when you date, you should date in the Lord. You may say, "Well, the young man that my daughter is dating is a good boy." Is he saved? If not, then what makes him good? If a person has anything good within, it is because Christ dwells within. It is not one's own goodness that makes a person good. When a saved young person falls in love with one who is

unsaved, then it is hard to break up the relationship.

The Middle Wall of Partition Broken Down

In the Old Testament dispensation there were two rooms. Now there are no longer two rooms that divide the people in worship. David's tent had only one room, and the Church of God has only one room. Speaking of the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross, Luke 23:44-45 says: "And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst." You need to understand that there is no longer a veil between the two rooms, because there is only one room under the new covenant.

There is only one Sacrifice. Hebrews 10:12 tells us, "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." When our High Priest went in to offer up a sacrifice for our sins, He did not have to apply blood for Himself, because He was without sin. Jesus offered a sacrifice for your sins and my sins. We have a great High Priest who was without sin. He was tempted just as you and I are tempted, yet without sin. When He offered that sacrifice, the Bible says He sat down on the right hand of God.

Someone may ask, "Why don't you believe in a second work of grace?" I believe in many works of grace. The Apostle Paul was put in the ministry by a work of grace. It is by grace that a person is saved, and it is by grace that the Christian is kept. Friend, you are responsible for your own sins. Hebrews 9:7 says, "But into the second [room] went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." There were two reasons that blood was offered: for the high priest himself and for the errors of the people.

Our High Priest was without sin, and He was a willing sacrifice. The Apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:13-16: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off [he was talking to the Gentiles] are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."

Christ has broken down the middle wall of partition between the Gentile and the Jew. He has abolished the law of commandments and those things that were opposed to the Gentile, and He has made twain one new man. Both are in one body. John 1:11 tells us, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

On the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit came first to His own, then to the Gentiles down at Cornelius' house, and then to the Samaritans. God was making twain one new man, or one body. Before that time, there were the Jews who could not get along with the Gentiles, and the Samaritans, which the Jews considered to be half-breeds. What brought them all together? God's Holy Spirit; there was one Sacrifice for all. When they accepted Jesus Christ in old-time salvation, the blood of Jesus Christ washed away their sins. He sent the Holy Spirit and made one body, the Church of the Living God. Glory to God! The Church of God is the apple of His eye. It is the rebuilding of David's tabernacle. I praise God for His goodness!

Whosoever Will Can Come

King David was a great man of God. He was a prophet, a king, and a priest; but our High Priest is

greater. Our King is greater; our Prophet is greater. With our King, our Prophet, our High Priest, the tomb is empty. They said David was in his sepulchre, and his sepulchre was with them. At the tomb of Jesus, you will find no body, because He was resurrected, and He is sitting down at the right hand of God. He is Head of the Church of the Living God.

In this dispensation of time, we all can have part in the rebuilding of the tabernacle of David. What is the tabernacle of David? It is the Church of God. Just as David served all who were present that day, Christ will serve all who come to Him. Where? He serves them in the Church of God. We all are one body, and we have one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. There is no confusion in having only one. It takes in all who are believers, regardless of their race, their culture, their language, or their nationality. Whosoever will can be a part of David's tabernacle. Isn't that wonderful?

Friend, you do not have to stand on the outside with a sacrifice, because the Sacrifice has already been made. The Spirit of God and the Word of God testify the same thing. Whosoever will, let him come. If you are not part of the body of Christ, you can be. You can be just like all the other members of the body of Christ. How? By humbling yourself at an altar of prayer and accepting the one Sacrifice, the blood of Jesus Christ. There is enough blood for the sins of the whole world. When we speak of the blood, we are not talking about literal blood; we are talking about having faith in the blood of Jesus Christ.

The Lord will forgive you for every sin. You may say, "Well, I

can't remember every sin." Neither could I. I doubt that anyone could remember every sin that he has ever committed. When I got saved, I just turned them all over to Jesus Christ. I did not even really know how to pray.

Someone may say, "I can't pray very well." I couldn't either, but that makes no difference to God. Jesus said in Luke 18:10, "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee [he knew well how to pray], and the other a publican [he was not eloquent with his words, but what he spoke came from his heart]." The publican spoke only seven words: "God be merciful to me a sinner." The Bible says he would not even lift up his eyes to heaven. What does that tell you? He had godly sorrow; he was truly sorry. What did the Lord say? He said in verse 14, "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified . . . for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Dear one, do not keep putting off repentance. Often because people feel good physically and things are going well for them, they do not want to get saved. They think, "I will get saved later on, when I need it." Friend, you just never know when you are going to need God in a great way. There is always a time in a man's or a woman's life when that person will come to something he or she cannot handle. When you come to those times, you surely want God in your heart. As I bring the message to a close, if you need help, there is a great supper spread, and God will give it to you as your need is. Won't you come to Him?

(Cassette C-4869E)

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Job 16:16 My face is foul with weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death;

17 Not for any injustice in mine hands: also my prayer is pure.

18 O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.

19 Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high.

20 My friends scorn me: but mine eye poureth out tears unto God.

21 O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour!

22 When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.

Death, Judgment, and the Destruction of This World

Brother David Watson

"But a Step Between Me and Death"

Death is a sad situation anytime it comes. It is an unwelcome guest, although in some circumstances it may be for the best. Yet, because of the bonds of friendship and love and compassion that we have for one another, death is grievous and hurtful. Nevertheless, the Bible teaches us that death is coming to each of us and that our time is always ready. Jesus said in John 7:6, "My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready."

God could call you or me into judgment today. Many people never

seem to stop and think about death. They do not consider the reality of death. Many people seem to think they are going to live forever. People are building homes finer than ever and feeling assured that they are going to be here to enjoy them. They make many plans without considering God in their plans. Jesus told of a rich man who was also making plans, but God called for his soul. You see, none of us knows when he is going to leave this life to meet our Maker, but it is a surety that He is going to call each of us to meet Him. Death is on our trail.

I visit the children's hospitals and see little ones fighting for life, with

mothers and fathers standing back, feeling hurt and grief. Often in my ministry I have tried to comfort families and pray with them. Sometimes God does not see fit to spare the life, rather He calls that one from this time world into eternity.

How sad it is that so many people in our world today are not considering the fact that death is on their trail. Death is on the trail of each of us. Dear one, a day is coming when you are going to die and meet God. It may not be difficult for you to go to a funeral home and see someone else in a casket; however, it is very sobering to think of your own funeral and to think about how you

will look in a casket.

Many times I have stood by and watched people take their last breath of life. I remember one man who seemed to suffer terribly. It seemed as though his lips were on fire, craving water, as he was leaving this world. While I waited with this man, another man was placed nearby. Since I knew some of his family, I stood in the doorway. That man was struggling to get his last breath, and he was putting up a fight against death. After that man passed away, I talked to his family, and none of them had any hope of his having made things right with God. That was a very sad situation. His dying state was for just a little while, but eternity is forever.

We need to think about dying and having things fixed as they ought to be, because death is just a heartbeat away. David said in 1 Samuel 20:3, "There is but a step between me and death." Friend, you do not know when that last step is coming between you and death, but it is coming. Eternity and the Judgment are coming. Therefore, you need to be right with God, always ready to leave this life and go to a better place to be with God, a place where death will never come again. It is a place of no sorrow, no pain, and no trouble, a place to be with the Lord forever.

Your Youthful Days Shall Pass

God warns us in His Word that death is coming our way. Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 12:1-2: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain." Solomon was warning that one should use his youth for the glory of God, before the days come when one has no pleasure in them.

We all are here for God's glory and honor. We are the offspring of

God. Solomon let you know that when your youth is upon you and you are at your best, you should be busy working for the Lord and that you ought to make your decision for eternity and the Judgment Day then. Also, he let you know that you are not always going to be young. Your strength is going to diminish, and you are not going to feel as good in your latter days as you felt in your younger days. Therefore, while you can do something for God and lay up treasures in Heaven, where moths and rust do not corrupt and thieves cannot break through and steal, you need to be busy for God. You need to attend the worship services, support the cause of Christ, and lay up with God what you want to meet at the end of life's journey.

In Ecclesiastes 12:3 Solomon said, "In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened." He was talking about one's strength and the feebleness that comes as one gets older. One can feel death taking hold and subduing the body here in this world. Strength fails, and the body is not as strong as it used to be. As one becomes older, he cannot stand to lose those hours of rest as he could in his younger days, and he cannot toil through the day as he used to. Many things happen as age comes on, and it is telling you day by day that you are dying. Friend, you are not going to live on this earth forever. You are going to leave this world and go to your long home.

When Solomon said "the grinders cease because they are few," he was speaking of the teeth. As the years go by, some are more blessed than others to keep their teeth, but many people's teeth fall out or must be pulled out. Also, as we get older, the eyes do not work as well as they once did. Through the deteriorating of the body, God is saying, "You are heading to eternity." Eventually this earthly house will get to the place where it is unfit to live in.

There is nothing like being right with God, living for Jesus, and having God in your soul. Nothing compares to being ready to leave this world and getting a glorified body, one that will not know pain; then you will not have to worry about strength or the toil of the day. You can enjoy Heaven forever, but first you have to get right with God in this world. You need to think on these things, because God is warning you as you go along.

"Prepare to Meet Thy God"

Ecclesiastes 12:5 reads, "Also when they shall be afraid. . . ." I want to stop right there. Whenever age gets hold of people, often they become more fearful of things, and they become very careful of their footsteps. When my children were little and I took them with me somewhere, my wife often asked each child, "Honey, do I have you wrapped up enough? Are you going to be okay?" She wanted to make sure that the children had their coats buttoned and were ready to go out into the cold weather.

After you become older, that changes. Your footsteps become slower, certain fears take hold of you, and the children will come and take hold of your arm, saying, "Dad, Mom, are you sure you are okay? Are you sure that you don't need to put your coat on?" That will tell you that you are closer to eternity and your final destination than you have ever been. You will realize it, and so will your children. Also, those who have known you down through the years can see that a change is taking place. God is calling, Heaven is calling, and eternity is waiting. Friend, if you ever do anything, please, trust Jesus and live for Him so that you can make Heaven your home. It is worth it all to be ready, because one day, as sure as you are living, you are going to meet God.

King Solomon sat and judged many cases, yet concerning what was the end of things, he said that "all is vanity." No matter how hard

you work, your body is going down; death is coming your way. Then you will not be interested in the house, the car, or how much money you have in the bank.

Jesus told of a certain rich man who died, and when death overtook him, he was not worried about his money or his farm. He thought of his brothers who were yet living. It is so important to know that you are going to die and meet God. The Judgment Day is coming, and you need to be ready.

From the fruits that I see of people's doings, too many act as if they do not have to give an account to God for their deeds. Their attitude is, "I can live the way I want to and get out of this world what I can get." Friend, I repeat, as sure as you are living, the Judgment Day is coming. The Bible states in Hebrews 9:27, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." You are going to die, and you must give an account for how you have spent your life in this world. The Bible exhorts you in Ephesians 5:16, "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Before Jesus came to this world, God spoke to Israel and said, "O Israel . . . prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12). Dear one, you need to get ready, because you will have to answer to God.

God Will Bring Every Work Into Judgment

Many people act independent and say, "Well, I will live my own life. I don't have to answer to anyone." Romans 14:7 tells us, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." You will have to answer for the influence that you have had on others. You must answer for the time that God has given you in this world. There will be no argument on the Day of Judgment. You will answer for every idle word that you have spoken. Therefore, you need to be careful of how you spend your life. You should make sure that you are living

to God's glory and honor and being a blessing to Him.

Jesus said in Matthew 25:31-36: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

Saint, God has a work for you to do. What you do to your fellowman, you are doing to God. Therefore, you need to take heed concerning how you spend your life and be careful of the deeds that you do. Jesus let us know that this world is not the last place that you will be. You are going to stand in God's judgment. The Bible tells us that the goats (the sinners) are going to be on the left hand and the sheep (God's saints) are going to be on the right. On that day, God, who knows your soul and what is in your soul, will reward you according to what you have done in this world.

In the parable of the talents, one man received five talents, another man received two talents, and another received one. The man who had received only one talent went and hid it in the earth because he was afraid. The man who had received five talents used them and gained five more. The man who had received two talents used them and gained two more.

We receive many blessings in this world when we live for God. We are also laying up treasures in Heaven. Some people have labored and burned the midnight oil working for

God, and God has enlightened their souls and blessed their lives because they have toiled. Then, others are afraid and have set aside their talents. They have not labored and worked for treasures. It would not be fair for God to reward those who have worked almost to death the same as those who have sat and taken it easy. When you leave this world, you will meet what you have laid up with Jesus Christ. If you are laying up treasures in Heaven, you will meet it in the by-and-by.

God's Word says that you will be rewarded according to your deeds. In Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 Solomon said: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." All the things that the Ecclesiastes writer spoke of and searched out, he found to be vanity. He let you know that your highest priority should be to fear God and keep His commandments. Why? He is bringing you to judgment, and you will have to give an account for the deeds that you have done in this life.

The Law of Sowing and Reaping

Galatians 6:7 tells us, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." What you are sowing, you are going to reap. You need to fear God and keep His commandments so that you can have God's approval on your life. What a sad thing it would be to stand in the Judgment and think, "Oh, I wish I had done better." While I do not know altogether what the Judgment will be like, to those on the left, it will surely be terrible to hear God say, "Depart from Me, I never knew you." Their end will be the flames of eternal hell, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

While I cannot describe to you how terrible hell will be, I can relate it to you this way: Think of how hot

the sun gets and how you search for comfort from the sun. The sun has been in place since God put it there. No man has been putting any fuel on it, yet it burns and burns. That is how hell will be, except it will burn forever. Those who go there will never cease to beg and plead for mercy, but their prayers will not be answered. They will be in that place of torments forever. To avoid that, friend, you must be ready when Judgment Day comes. Death is sure. One day it is going to knock on your door. Sooner or later, you are going to meet God.

If people could really get a vision of the seriousness of dying and having to give an account for what they have done on the Day of Judgment before God, they would have more fear and reverence toward God. All the evils that people have in their hearts—the murder, the adultery, the malice, the envy, the jealousy, speaking against the pastor and the church, the hatred, and the despise—must be answered for at the Judgment of God. There is another day besides this day, and we will have to answer for what we have done in this world, so we need to get it right while we are here. Friend, you have only one life to live, and it needs to be right so that when you stand in the presence of Almighty God, you might have clean hands.

When you lie down tonight, while sleeping, your heart could stop beating and your soul would go into eternity. Your family could call for a preacher or a doctor, but no one would be able to change the situation. Ecclesiastes 8:8 says, "There is no discharge in that war [speaking of death]." When God is ready to take you out of this life, the doctor cannot stay the hand of death.

Matthew tells us on the Day of Judgment, God will say to those on the left hand, "I was in prison, and you visited Me not. I was thirsty, you did not give Me any drink. I was naked, but you did not clothe Me." God will judge you for the opportunities that you have had.

Saint, you need to be busy doing the work of God, because you are going to meet God. Some people work only to be seen by men or to get a pat on the back. You should not work because you want others to notice, but because you are going to meet God in eternity.

Christian friend, some souls are thirsty, spiritually speaking, and if you are where you should be spiritually, that soul may take a drink of water from the fountain of God and make Heaven his home. How good it is to stand in the gap and make up the hedge, or to stand between that person and judgment and help him to be ready to meet God.

According to Revelation, Chapter 3, many souls in this Laodicean church age are naked and poor and cannot see their spiritual condition. If you are spiritual and in the right place, God's Holy Spirit can use you to instruct a soul, and perhaps that soul will put on a white robe and a crown of righteousness and be saved from hell. Many who should be in the right place and could help others cannot because they are lukewarm. They must answer to God in eternity. I have heard people say, "If So-and-So would live right, I could live right." That is no excuse. You should want to live right.

The Lord Is Not Slack Concerning His Promises

This world is going to come to an end. Hebrews 1:11 lets us know that this world will "wax old as doth a garment." Second Peter 3:7 reads, "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." The Apostle Peter was speaking to souls to stir up their minds concerning the promises in prophecy. Peter said that scoffers would come in the last days and say, "Where is the promise of His coming?" He told them that the Lord is not slack concerning His promises.

Peter also reminded them of the

days of Noah, when the people put the preaching out of their minds, in essence, saying, "What Noah is preaching will never happen. He is building an ark, but the time will never come that it will float." They had never seen rain, but the Flood happened just as Noah had said. Noah found grace in the eyes of God, and he was saved. Those who failed to heed the Word of God perished. Once again, God is speaking to warn people that He is going to bring this world to an end. This time, it will be a final consummation. God is not going to send water to destroy it, but He is going to burn it with fire and destroy it completely.

You may say, "Well, Peter also spoke of new heavens and a new earth." If you rightly divide the Scriptures, you will learn that Peter was talking about old Jerusalem. Jesus had said He would leave to them a house desolate. He also reminded them that just as God destroyed the people in Noah's day, He is going to bring us all to judgment. Friend, Jesus is coming again. Peter was not preaching that God was going to set up new heavens and a new earth here. He was preaching that the old covenant, or the old Law, is gone, and the new heaven is the New Jerusalem, the New Testament Church of the Living God.

The new earth is the person who has been cleaned up and had everything wrong taken out and the righteousness of God poured in. I am looking for Jesus to come again, and one day I am looking to leave this world, to stand in judgment and give an account of how I have preached and lived. Whenever God has closed out time and gathered all His children inside Heaven and others have gone to hell, this world will go up in a blaze of fire and will be gone forever. In Heaven the children of God will not need any farm land or a pony to ride. Thank God, we will be in Heaven forever. I am laboring and longing for that day. It is just over the hilltop, and thank

God, it is coming soon. I am expecting to see my Jesus and thank Him for all He has done for me.

The Second Coming of Christ

The destruction of this world is going to take place. Paul let us know that the Lord is going to take His people out of here; we are going to meet Him in the air. Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

God let us know that He has not forgotten His people. He knows where each person is, from Adam to the last one born before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. He knows where every body is, whether each one is alive or dead, and even those who have been cremated and had their ashes spread upon the waters. When Jesus comes, those who are in the graves will rise first, and as they ascend, those who are still alive will go up together to meet Him in the

air. How quickly will all of that occur? The Bible lets us know that it will happen in a moment of time, in the twinkling of an eye. It will happen faster than you can see, and then God will destroy this earth.

I do not see the Judgment or the destruction of the world as being a long, drawn-out occasion. When God calls us and takes us out of here, it will take place in a moment of time. If you are saved and ready to go home, what a good feeling it is in your soul to know that when the trumpet begins to sound, you can look toward Heaven and hear the heavenly host sing. You can raise your hand and say, "Jesus, I am so glad to see You coming."

Friend, if you are not right with God, what a sad day that will be. What a day of fear and trembling that will be, because you are going to meet your Creator, the Maker of all mankind. If you are without God, you need to think about dying, the Judgment, and the destruction of this world. You need to get ready to go home while you have time to get it fixed with God. Of all that you will ever do in this world, nothing is more important than pleasing God in your daily walk and being ready to meet Him.

Child of God, whatever happens to you in this life, whatever you

have to suffer or face, it will be worth it all at the end of the way to meet Jesus! While God is speaking to your heart, you need to remember that, day after day, you are dying. Tomorrow you are going to be one day closer to the Judgment. Soon you will be in that long eternity. Many friends with whom I went to school are gone, and many people who once attended where I pastor today are gone. No doubt, you can drive through a community where you once lived and see house after house where friends used to live, but today someone else lives there. There are new faces in the community. That tells us that we are on the move; we all are heading toward our long home.

Friend, you are going to Heaven or hell, one or the other. You are either right or wrong; there is no in between. If God is speaking to your heart, you need to talk to Him. He is the One with whom you have to make things right. You can tell Jesus what your problem is, and He will listen to you. If He is knocking at your heart's door, why not take the opportunity that He is giving you? You need to do the best thing that anyone could ever do, and that is to get right with the Lord.

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Mechanicsburg Church of God

(The church is located just West of Mechanicsburg on US 36.)

Revival Meeting & special fellowship service

March 17-23, 2003

Evangelist: Brother Roger L. Decker, Newark, Ohio

Service Times: Mon. -Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat. 10:00 a.m.; Sun. 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

Special Fellowship Service will be held on Saturday at 10:00 a.m., with a meal provided by the local congregation.

For further information contact:

**Pastor Allen Polston, 2020 Ralph St., New Castle, IN 47362
Telephone: 765-521-8284**



There was a good interest and a good crowd the very first night of the revival meeting in an Alabama town several years ago. Several people came forward to be saved. In the back of the church there were three young men. They had talked during the song service, and though they had listened attentively to the message, they had begun to talk again during the invitation.

The next night was another good service, and a number of people came forward to accept Christ. I particularly noticed one young man. He was bandaged and painted with Mercurochrome as though he had recently been in an accident. I had noticed that he walked down the aisle slowly and painfully. I explained to him briefly the plan of salvation and asked him to wait near the front so that I might speak to him some more.

As I stepped back to the pulpit, I noticed him walking slowly back down the aisle. He walked back to where he had been sitting and took a young woman by the hand, speaking to her earnestly, and then leading her, came back down the aisle to the front. It was his sister, and she, too, accepted Christ. Then I noticed that he had walked back down the aisle, took another young woman by the hand, turned, and came back down the aisle leading her to the altar. She was the young woman to whom he was engaged to marry, and she, too,

had come to receive Christ. All three of these young people were happily converted.

I was surprised to learn that the young man in bandages was one of the young men who had attended the meeting the night before and had talked during the service. One of the three young men had that very day bought a beautiful used convertible and had taken the other two friends for a ride to the top of a nearby mountain.

The road was narrow, winding, and dangerous. When they had begun their decent, the driver had stepped on the brake pedal, but the little rubber facing that was bonded to the pedal slipped off, and the young man's foot hit hard on the accelerator. The car jumped into the passing gear and shot toward the curve.

The car turned sideways and skidded over the precipice. All three of the young men were thrown out of the car. Incredibly, none of them was killed. All, however, were injured and taken to the hospital. The young man who attended the service and got saved was injured least of all, and after having been bandaged, he had been permitted to return home.

Late that afternoon, he had begged his father to have an ambulance take him to church. Surely the boy was delirious! They did not know if he had suffered internal injuries, and it would be dangerous to move him at

all. He was supposed to lie quietly in bed.

Then the boy explained to his father, "Dad, just last night I went to church to hear an evangelist preach. My friends and I made fun of those who took his preaching seriously. We joked about the idiots who went forward during the invitation, but today, Dad, when the car began to skid and I knew that it was going over the cliff, I just had time to think of one thing. I thought, 'Only last night I could have been saved! Only last night a man preached about Jesus and urged me to turn from my sins, but I would not do it.'"

The young man paused, and then continued, "Dad, when that car went over the cliff, I thought I was going to hell! I didn't think I could possibly come out of that alive. But when I regained consciousness, I prayed and promised God that if He would just let me live until tonight, I would go to church and be saved."

The young man's father had been so impressed that, even though the doctors had forbade him to do so, his father took the back seat out of the family car, filled it with pillows, and made his own ambulance so that he could take his son to the revival meeting. As a result, the young man, as well as his sister and his sweetheart, came to know the Lord.

Selected

Psalm 13:1 How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?

2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be

exalted over me?

3 Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;

4 Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that

trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

5 But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.

6 I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

The Sleep of Death



Brother C. H. Dickerson

Staying Connected to the Source of Power

We want to focus on a portion of verse 3 of our Scripture text, where the Psalmist said, "Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death." David, in expressing his total dependence upon God, in essence, said, "Hear me, O Lord, because I am lost without You. I am in darkness without You. If I die unforgiven, I am lost, and I will sleep the sleep of death."

Saint, your only hope depends on your staying plugged into the power line, so to speak. Isaiah wrote about a time when people became careless. He stated in Isaiah 47:7-9: "And thou

saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments."

Unless we pray as David prayed in our Scripture text, we will be doomed for failure. The bondage

that David was talking about was symbolic language dealing with a type of being under the power of sin. David expressed that his only hope to get out of bondage was for God to hear him.

People living in sin are in bondage, and their only hope of getting out of that bondage is their calling upon God and having Him hear them. My friend, after you have called upon God and He has heard you and gotten you out of bondage, the only way to stay out of bondage is to remain plugged into the power line so that you can hear from God day by day. You need to realize that when you get saved, your battle is not over, your trials are not over, and your temptations are not over.

We all have trials and temptations and troubles, but we have the power to call upon God. Friend, unless He hears your prayer and does something about it, you are doomed for failure. Again, I say, if you will stay plugged into the power line, God will give you the power to live a victorious life, not just for one day but every day. You can have victory over the powers of darkness.

David was expressing his desire to God that his enemies not be exalted over him. God has given His people a promise that He will do His part if we will do our part, so that the power of the devil cannot prevail over the church. The church is made up of people, and this is where the devil is trying to work. He is not working on a church building, but he tries to work on the saints of God.

Jesus stated in Matthew 16:18, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." In other words, the gates of hell cannot become stronger than the power of God. Satan cannot be victorious over you if you will do your part. Jesus told us what our part is in Matthew 16:24-25: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

Too often people go to an altar of prayer and get saved, and then they think they have done everything they need to do. On the contrary, God has something for you to do daily. Serving God is more than just getting saved, my friend. The main issue is *keeping* saved after you get saved; that is what God wants you to do. When you get saved and do not remain saved, you are a reproach to the Church of God. God wants you to get saved and stay saved so that you can be a light to this lost and dying world and show them the power there is in serving God. Salvation is not merely a religion of some kind. It will save you from a life of

sin, turn your life around, and make you a new creature. If you should backslide, it is a reproach to the Kingdom of God. God does not want you to do that.

Take Up Your Cross and Follow Christ

You cannot serve God and live to please the flesh. If you are going to stay saved, you must deny your wants and your likes, or what you like and what you want to do. Then you must take up your cross and follow Him. I want you to understand that this cross has two meanings: First, the *cross* is a place to die. Second, you must bear a *cross*; in other words, you must carry your load.

When God saves a man or a woman, He places that one in the body as it pleases Him. If you are going to live a victorious life, you need to take up your cross, or the place where God set you in the body, and carry that cross. If you try to renege or hold back and fail to do what God has called you to do, He said you are going to lose your life. If you spend your life for the Lord, you will find it at the end of the road.

Child of God, you are in for a payday, and you will get that payday if you will do the work that God has called you to do. That work is to deny yourself, take up your cross, and carry your share of the load of the congregation. It is not up to the pastor. Each of us has a load to carry. If you will do your part, the Lord will do His part.

Today we are in one of the busiest ages in which man has ever lived. I want you to realize that in this busy age, one of the very first things that one neglects is his Christian experience. When it comes to reading and studying the Word of God, often people wait until they are tired, and then they neglect reading and praying as they should.

Some get so busy that they neglect to go to the house of God. Too many times when it comes to

God's day, people get so busy with the cares of life that they neglect all these things, and soon they are in a backslidden condition. People are so busy that they neglect to give the 10 percent tithe that belongs to God.

The Word of God lets you know that if you are going to stay true to God, you must "Study to show thyself approved" (2 Timothy 2:15). The Word also says to "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Then, it instructs, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" (Hebrews 10:25). Why should we do all these things? We are living in perilous times, and the only directions we get are through studying God's Word, prayer, and getting to the house of God to hear the preached Word. You cannot direct your own steps, my friend. You cannot direct your own spirit; you must have help. Your help comes through praying, reading and studying God's Word, and above all, getting to the house of God and listening to a man of God. You see, you may overlook many things in your life, but a man of God pours out the message that God has given him. It gets right down where we live and uncovers things that we need cleansed from. Why? So that we can go out and fight the battle and win souls for God.

A Careless Age

We are living in a dangerous time, a time when people are asleep, or inactive. It is also a very casual age. I have never seen such a casual age, even when it comes to the way people dress. As I was studying for this message, my mind went back to the time when I was a salesman. The dress rules for the company that I worked for was a suit. It did not make any difference whether it was 90 degrees in the shade or in the sun, you wore a suit with a white shirt, a necktie, a hat, and well-shined shoes. These days some salesmen wear colored shirts partially unbuttoned and no tie whatsoever. Some look as if they have been out feeding the

swine somewhere, and they go in as salesmen.

The church is the most important place we go, and we ought to put on the best clothes we have to attend the services. Why? Because we are trying to sell something. We are trying to show the sinner that he needs salvation.

I want you to realize that the reason we are in this careless, casual age is that people are asleep. While this is transpiring, the tares are being sown among the wheat. I want you to consider two things: when the tares are sowed and the results. Jesus spoke this parable in Matthew, Chapter 13, and He described five personalities involved in this parable.

Matthew 13:36-41 reads: "Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, [number one] He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; [number two] the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but [number three] the tares are the children of the wicked one; [number four] The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and [number five] the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity."

Whenever God is displeased with someone, His angels' (or the ministry's) job is to preach the Gospel so that person will either get in or get out. God has a church that is holy and has praise for Him. He uses the church to set forth an example to this lost and dying world so that they can see what God can do for them.

Jesus said in verses 41-43: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend

[or create displeasure], and them which do iniquity [in other words, those who practice lawlessness and will not measure to the Truth]; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Overcoming Power

Jesus went out in the morning time and sowed the good seed. The Scripture lets us know on the Day of Pentecost that He had sown the seed, but through time, the church at Ephesus left their first love. They wanted to spend their lives on something else besides serving God.

Friend, God will not take second place in your life. He must be number one or He is going to be out of your life. If you try to crowd something else in to share first place with your love for God, He will let you go right ahead, but He will be on His way.

After the church at Ephesus left their first love, they went into darkness. Many years later, God moved upon Martin Luther and gave him a little truth (justification by faith). We find that in the Thyatira age, when Christ tried to give them some light, the people got that woman Jezebel, who called herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce His servants. God never called her, but she called herself a prophetess. The Bible says Christ gave her a space to repent, but she would not.

Down through every age until the seventh-seal age, God has called a ministry that has backbone enough to stand up and preach God's eternal Truth whether people like it or not. Why? Because He is going to have a church that will shine forth as righteousness. The devil has worked from the time of the morning church until the evening time church. Every time God gave light, man got in and dimmed that light. Nevertheless, God has called a ministry to wash away the scum, to roll the clouds

away so the Sun can shine in its fullness.

Today we have the light of every age, so we can see what defeated each church age. Therefore, God is saying, "Do not follow in their footsteps, because you will be defeated." We are living in a lukewarm age. It is the only age about which Christ did not have one good thing to say. You *can* overcome the spirit of lukewarmness. How? By the power of God. You do not have to be lukewarm. You can have fire in your soul, my friend. Thank God, we have fire in the pulpits, in the song service, and in the special singing. If you are lukewarm, it is because you have chosen to be.

In these last days God is preparing a church that will shine brightly. How is the church going to shine? She is going to shine with righteousness so that people can see her. They may never accept the Gospel, but they will say, "I have never seen anything like her." They will see the unity and feel the Spirit of God. Also, they will feel the warmth and the welcomeness.

God has sent in a faithful and true ministry in these last days just preceding the Second Coming of Christ when He is going to deliver up the kingdom. People are going to either awaken or go into a perpetual sleep. It all depends upon each individual, whether he or she wants to be awakened and will walk in the light. God is trying to awaken everyone, but not too many want to be awakened.

I do not want to see anyone miss Heaven, but if a person is determined to sleep and have his own way, there is nothing more that anyone can do. Some have the attitude, "I am not going to listen to those preachers. I have my own righteousness and my own ideas about the doctrine. I know what I believe, and I don't have to go to church and do this or that." Some even sit down and write letters and send them to preachers to try to discourage them. Well, I am going to tell you, that kind of attitude came from the devil.

The devil has worked throughout every church age, and he is still working today, but not without a battle. The saints are going to be victorious. Yes, we have battles. Do not ever get it in your mind that we are going to be free from battles in this life, because the devil is trying to deceive you. He is a liar; he was a liar from the beginning, and he always will be. After you get saved, you are going to have more battles than you ever had before. Nevertheless, Jesus said if you will follow Him and take up your cross and die out to self (or your will), He will give you the victory. There is no failure in God.

The Results of Becoming Lax

In the parable that Jesus told concerning the tares and the wheat, Satan made no attempt to sow unproductive seed while the Son of Man was sowing good seed, and there was reproduction. Nothing in that parable talks about the devil going out while Christ was sowing the seed and pulling it up just as He sowed it. No, Christ sowed the good seed, and after He had sown the seed, men went to sleep. Then the devil came along and sowed some seed. The seed that Jesus sowed was productive. First, He had only twelve disciples, and then seventy, and then five hundred, and then three thousand. Three thousand got saved on the Day of Pentecost, and the church kept growing until the multitudes were as the number of the sands of the seas. However, while men slept, Jesus said in Matthew 13:25 that "his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." While the field was left unattended, the enemy came in and did a work. There was a time between A.D. 33 and A.D. 270 that men became lax. In the Book of Revelation, Christ said they left their first love. They relaxed their efforts and became casual.

If there was ever a time when we needed to take a closer look at the casualness and see what it actually

means, it is now. Companies have let down their dress standards for employees. Many companies allow employees to work in almost any attire they want to wear. If they want to wear their little shorties, they do it. This is a casual time.

Christian friend, when you get too casual in your dress, it will not be long until you get casual in your Christian experience. This casualness that is out in the world will come right in the church, only in a modified way. You may ask, "Do you mean that we will dress casually?" No, I do not mean that you will come to church in your shorts. No saint of God would do that. However, you can become casual.

According to *Webster's Dictionary*, the word *casual* means "careless." If you divide the word *careless*, you will come up with "care less." Many people today could care less about how they look. There was a time when people dressed modestly. I hate to see summertime come, because the dress that you see is absolutely hideous. People take off as much as the law will allow them. They are careless about whom they tempt, and they could care less who lusts after them. That is the purpose of dressing so immodestly.

This carelessness or casualness out in the world can creep in among the saints of God. Some feel that they can dress any way they want to and still worship God. Christian friend, you need to remember that we are here to sell Christ to this lost and dying world. To emphasize how important our dress is, I will illustrate it this way: When you go into a new restaurant to check it out, you often base your opinion on your first impression. From that experience, you will decide whether or not you will go back. That is exactly how visitors judge whether they will come back to church. The devil wants the saints to get so casual in their living and their dress that when visitors walk in, they will not want to come back, because they will not get a good impression. As I said earlier, the house of God is the

most important place we will ever go; therefore, we ought to dress in the best clothes we have.

I told you what the dress standard was for the company that I used to work for, because when we walked in that store, they expected us to sell something. Likewise, God wants us, as saints of God, to sell ourselves. Why did He save us? Why did He deliver us from sin? To show how great and how beautiful salvation is and to show them what it will do for them. Sinner friend, it will set you free and turn your life around. It will enable you to have victory over the cigarette habit, the alcohol habit, and the drug habit. My friend, it will set you completely free. I trust that this will be the day that you will turn to Christ.

Seeds That the Devil Sows

In the parable that Jesus taught concerning the tares and the wheat, He said that while men slept, they left the field unattended, and they went into complete darkness. What does that portray? Men slept spiritually, and while they did, the enemy came in and planted tares. You may ask, "What are the tares?" The tares are people who call themselves saints, but they do not have saintly spirits. When someone has the Spirit of God, he is there to encourage, not to talk about the church or to try to discourage people. When someone has a spirit that wants to tear something down, it is not God's Spirit.

The devil does not want the work of God to prosper. The only way he can stop it from prospering is to sow seed. How does He do that? He gets some people to sit back and grumble and complain and say, "This is not the Truth. That is not the way it is." They try to destroy others. That is not God's Spirit. That is nothing but tares that the devil has sown. The only ones they will affect are those who are asleep spiritually. They will not affect people who are on fire for God. Someone who is disgruntled will whisper in other people's ears. They want to sow seed in them that

will develop into something destructive. The trouble comes when people go to sleep spiritually.

I want you to understand more about these tares. If you look up the word *tares* in the Greek, the Greek word is **darnel**, which means "a rye grass with a seed that is infested with a poisonous fungus." The devil has one thing in mind in sowing tares, and that is to poison the saints of God with discontentment, a lethargic spirit, the spirit of discord, fault-finding spirits, and the spirit of jealousy. The devil sows these seeds to discourage people. When people get discouraged, then they are not going to learn. We all can work together in the spirit of unity. We may not always agree, but we can work together for one common cause, and that is to see souls saved.

Someone may say, "I just won't work with him." Well, let me tell you something, the Word of God says that God will reward every man according to the work that he has done. Now, if you do not do any work, you will not receive a reward, or a payday; then you cannot get down and pray, "God, do this for me," because He will not do it. The reason is that you did not do the work that He called you to do. Not many people in this world will go out and work, unless they are going to have a payday. The same is true spiritually.

You may say, "Well, that preacher is not feeding my soul." You need to look in a mirror and then repent for lying. You do not get fed if you do not work. Also, you are not going to make Heaven your home, because Heaven is the reward for what you have done here. If you do not do anything, you will not make Heaven your home. I am trying to encourage you to get to the house of God, roll up your sleeves, and go to work for God. We need to see people saved. People need to see a godly pattern to follow so that they will want what we have.

The Bible tells us that the great mountain at one time was on fire, but it went down into the sea. That

happened because the people left their first love, but man came along one day and resurrected it. Revelation 13:1, 11-12 states: "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. . . . And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." There was a wound on the beast that was killed; but men came along and tried to heal it, and they called it Protestantism.

Protestantism exercised the same power and the same spirit that the first beast had. The first beast (that mountain that went down into the sea) was nothing more than the church when the people lost their first love and lost their power. However, man came along and resurrected it and made a man-made, earthly organization of it. Again, it exercises all the power of the first beast, and its purpose is to defeat the saints of God.

A Separation Takes Place in the Harvest

While men slept (in other words, they were not working wholeheartedly for God), from the morning church until the evening light, people became unproductive and seed was sown among the saints. Nevertheless, at the end there will be a gathering by His angels. You see, at the harvesttime Jesus said there is a separation; the harvesttime is at the end. When you drive by the wheat fields in the spring, the wheat is coming up green, but when the harvesttime comes, you will see it harvested. Then nothing but the stubble will be left, and the wheat, or the good grain, will be moved into a barn, or into a granary. In the

harvest, a separation takes place. The straw is left out in the field, and then the farmer comes along and gathers it up for bedding for the animals.

Today a separation is taking place, spiritually speaking. God has called a ministry to preach God's Truth here at the very end of time, just preceding the Second Coming of Christ. God's ministry is going to preach the Word no matter what people think of it, and the saints will take it and eat it and become more powerful for God. The others will reject it. This brings a separation.

Now, certainly things just do not happen by chance. In our day and age we are seeing a separation. Saint of God, cheer up. God does what He sees fit, and He knows what He is doing. God's plan is always carried out. Matthew 25:30 tells us what will happen to the slothful servants who do not use their talents: "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Who are the gatherers at the end? The Scripture lets us know that they are the seventh-seal ministry. Matthew 13:41 states that "The Son of man shall send forth his angels." His angels are those whom He has called and anointed. God saw that they had backbone enough to stand up and preach the Word of God; therefore, He chose them. Again, the Scripture says, "The Son of man shall send forth his angels [not men who just decided to go to a seminary somewhere to take up a profession], and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity."

There have always been people hanging around the Church of God who have been out of step, causing division, and who always want to sow discord. God told His ministry to go out and preach the Gospel. All people who are friends of the Kingdom of God are going to gather in. How? By the preaching of the Word of God. Those who practice iniquity, the lawless, and those who will not measure to the Truth yet sit around

the church for the benefits, failing to back the congregation or the preacher, will be cast into outer darkness.

Separating the Wheat From the Chaff

The saints shine forth as the sun to enlighten those who are hungering for the Truth. Only one group of people is going to get help in the day and age in which we are living, and that is those who are hungering for the Truth and thirsting after righteousness. If you are satisfied with what you have, then you are dead spiritually. God wants you to hunger for more truth and greater understanding. The more light you have, the more power you have, and the more separation there is between you and the world.

God has a separate people. He has no mixture; the saints must be pure gold. When Solomon had the tabernacle built in the Old Testament, he was not satisfied with 99 percent gold; it had to be pure gold. Today God's people are pure gold in the church. The Word scorches the dross. Today a separation is going on, and the wheat is going to be gathered into the garner (or the church), and the chaff will just drift around here and there.

When I was growing up on the farm, we had an old thrashing machine. We hooked up an old steam engine out in the field with a long belt that was twisted and hooked up so that it was tight. Then we started the old tractor and went out in the field for the wheat after it had been shocked. We loaded the wheat on a wagon and brought it in and some threw it in the thrashing machine, which had a big, long shoot that shot out the straw; then the straw went down and made a straw stack. On the other side they had two funnels, and they had two sacks on that funnel. They filled one sack, and then switched over to the other one. While that sack was filling, they put a new sack on, and so on.

They then put the wheat into the

garner, or the wheat bin, but the chaff just blew around. The blower on that thrashing machine blew the straw out into that straw stack, and it just blew the chaff. Sometimes we watched that chaff, and it looked as if it was going down and was going to settle, and then all at once the wind would catch it and take it back up again. The Lord likened this to people. He said they were going to gather the wheat into the garner, but the chaff is just going to float around. Sometimes it looks as if ones are going to settle down in the Truth, and about that time another wind comes along, and away they go. You do not know where they are, and they do not know either.

My friend, if you are pure wheat, you will go where the Truth is, settle down, and go to work for God. Now there might be some things with which you disagree, but you should not be moved. You ought to stay right there, roll up your sleeves and work together with the saints of God to make it one of the greatest Church of God congregations there is. Storms are going to come and diversity is going to come, but that should not move you. That is what unity is.

Are You Filling Your Place in the Body?

I want you to realize, first of all, that there is a great danger in becoming inactive in the kingdom and having tares sown in your experience, and that will cause you to become unproductive. When one did not use his talent (the place that God put him in the body of Christ), the Scripture tells us that Jesus cast the unprofitable servant out into darkness. First Corinthians 12:18 states, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." Verse 28 reads, "And God hath set some in the church [singular], first apostles, secondarily prophets [read these slowly, because I want to point out something to you], thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of heal-

ings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

Does that sound as though one has a higher position than another? No, we all have the same responsibility to make the body what it ought to be. My arms, my legs, my feet, my hands, my eyes, and my ears each have a job to do. You may say, "Well, I don't have anything to do in the body, so it doesn't make any difference whether I'm there or not. No one would miss me." I told the people in my congregation that if they ever said that, they should not brag about it, because they are showing me that they are not filling their places in the body. The Bible teaches us that helpers are just as important as an apostle, a song leader, and the man that stands behind the sacred desk.

Suppose you were to go to the house of God and found no preacher, no instrument players, no song leader, and no choir director? You would probably go home feeling mighty empty. God has called His saints to fill those positions. Christian friend, if you do not do your job as a helper, the work is not going to be done as it ought to be done.

Out on the job a brick mason has a helper called a tender. If the tender does not carry the bricks and the mortar to the brick mason, the work is not going to get done as efficiently. It would slow down the work dramatically. God has placed each member in the body as it pleases Him, and we each have a work to do.

If you are saved, God has called you to labor for Him. For example, He might have called you to pray for the pastor and the instrument players. We cannot do anything without God. Or He might have called you to help the choir director. You cannot help unless you are there. The pastor needs helpers. I know that because I am a pastor. I need help, and I need all the prayers that I can get so that I can do what God wants me to do.

There is a danger of becoming

unprofitable and having your eyes darkened without understanding, and it could result in the sleep of death. John said there is a sin unto death. Our Scripture text states in verse 3, "Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes [or let me see the light], lest I sleep the sleep of death." This happens when the saints get in a do-nothing state. Jesus tried to awaken people through parables that He taught.

The Bible says to walk in the light while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you. If you turn away from this light, you have turned down your place in Heaven.

God has given people another chance, but many people today are in a perpetual sleep, and they refuse to be awakened. No matter how religious they claim to be, they are in a perpetual sleep, and they are going to be lost forever. I pray that God

will help you, stir you up, and open your understanding. He has given us the light of all seven ages. Friend, you need to take advantage of the light and walk in it. Won't you do what God would have you to do so that you can be a light and win souls for God?

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[Guest Editorial—continued from page 2]

doubt, that is the reason those in sectarian religion still live in sin.

Let us examine the Scripture in Isaiah, Chapter 53, that speaks of the atonement. Verse 8 says, "He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living." Bear in mind that nothing takes God by surprise. Isaiah 46:10 lets us know that He knows the end from the beginning. Psalm 119:89 reads, "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." He knew from the council halls of eternity past what John 1:11 would say: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

How can we be certain that this seventieth week has occurred? Let us consider what the Scripture says occurred in the seventieth week. Verse 27 tells us, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week." The word "he" is a pronoun. Dispensational teachers say this "he" is the antichrist. They go back to verse 26 and say that "he" refers to the entire passage. Verse 27 says "he," and in verse 25 is the antecedent, "Messiah the Prince." In other words, verse 25 is saying, "Messiah the Prince shall confirm." Dispensational teachers use this verse to say that an antichrist will make and break a covenant. Contrariwise, the word "confirm" in no way suggests any making or breaking of a covenant. The word *confirm* in the Hebrew is the word *gabar*, which means "prevail"; it is never translated "make" or "break."

What did the Messiah come to do? Verse 24 describes six things that occurred to confirm the new covenant.

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression. . . ." This was the first thing that occurred. Literally this phrase is, "to finish transgression." Did Jesus do this? When He yielded up the Ghost in John 19:30, He said, "It is finished." What was finished? Isaiah 53:5 says, "But he was wounded for our transgressions." Hebrews 9:15 reads, ". . . by means of death, for the redemption of the transgression. . . ." Christ came in His first advent to finish transgressions.

The second thing mentioned that occurred in verse 24 was "to make an end of sins." Christ did this in His first advent. First John 3:5 says that "he was manifested to take away our sins." First John 3:8 reads, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; . . . For this purpose [for sin] the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." The work of the devil is sin. Christ came to make an end of sin.

The third thing that occurred in verse 24 was "to make reconciliation for iniquity." The word used for *reconciliation* is the same word used in the Book of Leviticus, where it is rendered "to make atonement." Surely Christ came in His first advent to make atonement. It is a present reality. The latter part of Hebrews 2:17 says that He came "to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Second Corinthians 5:19 states that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." Titus 2:14 tells us that He "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." Did Christ make reconciliation for iniquity? Certainly so.

The fourth thing that occurred in

verse 24 was that Christ came "to bring in everlasting righteousness." Second Corinthians 5:21 declares, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Christ came to bring everlasting righteousness. Each thing that Daniel 9:24 says would occur took place by the work of Jesus Christ in His first advent.

The fifth thing that occurred in verse 24 was that Christ came "to seal up the vision and prophecy." The phrase "to seal" is derived from the ancient custom of attaching a seal to a document to show that it was genuine. Christ sealed Old Testament prophecy by fulfilling it and then by shedding His blood and yielding up the Ghost in direct fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy. He sealed it with His blood.

The sixth thing that occurred in verse 24 was "to anoint the most Holy." Religionists take that and immediately think of an Old Testament tabernacle, or the Old Testament Jerusalem. On the contrary, "to anoint the most Holy" does not refer to a place, but rather a person, and that person is Jesus Christ. Luke 1:35 states, "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." What is the "most Holy?" No one is more holy than Jesus Christ. Hebrews 1:3 tells us that He is the express person of God's image. Was this "most Holy" anointed? Acts 10:38 says, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost

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Jeremiah 12:1 Righteous art thou, O LORD, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?

2 Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root: they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit: thou art near in their

mouth, and far from their reins.

3 But thou, O LORD, knowest me: thou hast seen me, and tried mine heart toward thee: pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter.

4 How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither, for the wickedness of them that dwell

therein? the beasts are consumed, and the birds; because they said, He shall not see our last end.

5 If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?



How Wilt Thou Do in the Swelling of Jordan?

Brother Esau Brooks

The Reality of Serving the Lord

Oh, what a glorious privilege it is to serve the Lord! I would not change it for all the money in the world. I would rather be an old-time Christian than anything else in this life. The Lord found me back in my early days. It was not when life had given me up and the devil had wasted my life that I turned to the Lord and He saved me in mercy. He found me as a young stripling, as

He did David, and all the years of my life have been spent in the service of the Lord. I am glad to report to you that every day is sweeter than the day before. I do not regret a mile that I have spent for the Lord.

Oh, I know some would say, "Well, you have missed many things." The way I see it is that I have missed only those things that were no good to me. I have had joy, and I still have joy. I have had happiness, and I still have

happiness. I have had pleasures, and I still have pleasures. Serving the Lord is wonderful!

Are you still living in sin, wasting your life by messing around with cocaine, marijuana, ecstasy, and all that rubbish? Do you want joy, real joy, wonderful joy? Let Jesus come into your heart. Nominal religion has given the world a bleak, dark picture of serving God, but I am glad that here and there you can still find those who have truly experienced

the reality of serving the Lord.

I have considered myself very fortunate to have had the Lord favor me with His salvation when He did. He did not have to do it, but He did. He could have left me out wandering in sin until these days, and no doubt I would never have found the Lord had I stayed out there until these days. What I see going on today under the garb and the profession and the form of religion is enough to sicken a dog's stomach. I would not be any part of that for anything in the world. I am glad that God saved me from it even before I knew anything about it. Now I can be in the midst of it and yet not of it.

You see, friend, salvation is more than just going to church and taking a Bible along as an ornament. It is more than shaking a preacher's hand or writing your name on a dotted line. It is a transformation! Paul said, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Even today if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

I want to introduce to you the fact that there is reality in serving the Lord. It is more than merely going to church and having a form of godliness. I thank God that it is real! I wish you would serve Him. Do not knock it until you have tried it. That which you are being confronted with in nominal religion has probably given you the wrong idea and the wrong leaning, but do not give up! You can still find what I call a *real* experience in the Lord.

Meeting God's Conditions

One day the physical life is going to end. Even that has been so wrongly interpreted and misrepresented to the masses of the earth today that people believe everyone who dies is going to Heaven. No, friend. If you do whatever *you* want to do in this life, you must pay a price—you cannot go to Heaven. For me to preach the

Gospel, I have to pay a price and meet God's conditions. This is not Heaven yet.

Jesus, in speaking about Heaven, said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2). Note carefully that He did not say, "I go to prepare a mansion for you." People have the notion all worked up in their heads that they have a mansion just over the hilltop. Well, I do not know what they are talking about. However, I do know that I have a future in Heaven for sure. I want you to realize that if you are going to walk the streets of Heaven, you are going to have to meet certain conditions in your life. You must pay a price. No one can get to Heaven by joining a church or by shaking a preacher's hand.

Nicodemus went to Jesus with the beautiful words, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God" (John 3:2). Jesus looked him straight in the eyes and, without any pretense whatsoever, said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). In Matthew 18:3, Jesus said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." If you want to go to Heaven, God help you to recognize that only He can tell you how to get there.

I would like you to get your attention focused in the future, on what is to come. For too long people have been merely looking at today. Occasionally we need to lift up our heads and look over yonder to see what is there, because we all are going to be there sooner or later. Often I think about those with whom I have rubbed shoulders, and they are no more. It seems as if I have more friends over there than I have here, and I get kind of lonesome. I get to the place where I kind of want to go. This old world is getting unfit for any decent-minded person to live in. I would not mind if the Lord were to say, "Okay, Brooks,

come on up. I am ready for you." Until then, with joy I am going to carry on. Until then, I am going to keep fighting the good fight of faith and keep pressing.

All Must Appear Before the Judgment Seat of Christ

I would like to hold before you the last question asked in our Scripture reading: "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" God put this question before the Prophet Jeremiah years ago, and as you have seen, it came in response to the complaint of Jeremiah concerning the state of affairs in his surroundings. The Prophet was weeping before God because he was concerned and troubled about how the wicked were prevailing around him in his day. I suppose it was a very dark picture, but what if he had lived until today and could see what we are seeing?

One reason that so many are looking down with disdain upon the idea of serving God is that they have the wrong notion that the wicked are prospering in their wickedness. The Prophet started his prayer of complaint before God with these words: "Righteous art thou, O LORD." He acknowledged and recognized the Lord's righteousness, but he said, in essence, "Yet let me talk with You of Your judgments." Things were not appearing too well from Jeremiah's point of view; therefore, he was concerned. It was not just ordinary wickedness with which the Prophet was confronted. It was a quality of wickedness in which people were wicked, yet they made great claims of a profession of religion.

Had Jeremiah been writing about today's happenings, he could not have been any closer to the state of affairs as it stands than what he was in that day. Nearly everywhere we look today, it seems as if we see nothing but wickedness. The worst kind of wickedness is found, as Paul spoke of when he wrote to the church of the Ephesians: "wicked-

ness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12). You do not have to be a Harvard graduate to know what I am talking about. It is so blatantly clear before our eyes concerning how much wickedness is prevailing. People are so confused anymore that they even believe that the church has failed. No, she has not failed, and she will never fail!

We do not hear much about Babylon today, because many have become participants of that which they were crying out against. It is time that we come to grips with that which we are confronted in these days. Then we need to come to grips with what we are going to do when it comes time to stand before the Lord, for the Bible states that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:10). Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 12:14, "For God shall bring every work into judgment . . . whether it be good, or whether it be evil." I used to wonder, "Why would God bring good works into judgment? I have come to learn that much of what people call good works really needs to be looked into seriously.

Saint, it is time to wake up to what the devil is pulling off. Quit being so casual about it and accepting it as a matter of fact, as something that we can do nothing about. Things *can* change if we want them to change and if we are willing to let God change them. Therefore, I put this question before you: "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"

Dare to Have a Purpose Firm, and Dare to Make It Known

The Prophet Jeremiah went on to ask the Lord, "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?" It seemed to him that the wicked were prospering. I suppose that is the way it is beginning to appear to far too many people today. People are pulling off so many shenanigans that we stand amazed. They speak words, but with no action; they carry a profession, but with no power. When Paul wrote to the

congregations of his time, he said that "perilous times shall come" (2 Timothy 3:1). Today men are lovers of their own selves, traitors and highminded, yet they have a form of godliness.

You might take this as being critical, but it is not meant to be criticism; it is meant to awaken men. Saint, you do not have to settle for what the devil is trying to pass off on the world under the cloak of religion. Thank God, you can dare to be different. I like the little song that says, "*Dare to be a Daniel. Dare to stand alone. Dare to have a purpose firm, and dare to make it known.*" It does not bother me to be unpopular, and it does not trouble me to have the world fight against me. The way I see it, that is the way it is supposed to be, according to the Bible.

Back in Martin Luther's time, when he was beginning the sixteenth century work of reformation, one morning as he was making ready to go out to minister, one of his attendants said to him, "Mr. Luther, do you know that everyone is against you?" Martin Luther stopped and pondered those words a little, and then he answered, "Then I am against the world." He did not bow, and he did not compromise. He refused to give in, and he won.

Too many people have the idea that you have to become a part of the crowd to win, but that is not so. People question: "How can only one church be right?" and "How can only one people be right?" How many people were right in the antediluvian age? Do you know what God said when He looked down on Noah? Genesis 7:1 tells us, "For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Only one man was found righteous before God.

How many were right in the days of Elijah? When the Prophet Elijah stood surrounded by eight or nine hundred false prophets, some of whom were eating at the king and queen's table, he said, "Lord, I am the only one left." When it came to going to Heaven, only Elijah went up in a whirlwind. How can one

dare to stand up and take on the world? God's people of the past never questioned that. They just went on and did what they had to do.

What we have going on today is nothing but radicalism, but in the wrong place. People have the idea that about all the church has to do is keep back and keep giving up until she blows away as a piece of trash. I disagree with that notion. That is not the way I see the church. I still see her as the wise man saw her in Song of Solomon 6:10 when he said, "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" That is the church, not what we are seeing today, in too many cases. The church is here, and she is still going on, but there is so much wrong and so much rubbish that many people are losing sight of her. The church still is going well. It does not matter how many seem to be turned against her, how many seem to be battling against her, she is going to come forth victorious.

The Reality of the State of Affairs

Again, the Prophet Jeremiah asked, "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?" What we are really experiencing today is a repeat of history. The difference is that many have lost their backbone. As one brother used to say, you need to have a railroad iron for a backbone if you are going to make it through. No one has ever been victorious for God by being weak-kneed or by having a backbone like a jellyfish, twisting and turning any way people want them to. I am so glad that I have something better than that.

In essence, the Prophet Jeremiah said, "Lord, You planted them, and they are taking root. They grow, and they bring forth fruit. You are near in their mouth, but far from their reigns. You are not governing or controlling; You are just letting

things run to pieces." That is the way it would appear, but onward moves the Great Eternal in the order of His plan. Louder rolls the thunder of His Word to man. I am saying, as one songwriter said, "*Louder, louder, hallelujah. See the glorious fountain flow.*"

Many people are pining in the cages of deception, longing to be set free. Denominationalism has become the order of the day, and so many are satisfied to let it be so. You may say, "We don't want to antagonize them, and we don't want to make things worse." Well, that is not what I am talking about. I am talking about making things better.

The Prophet Jeremiah went on to write in verses 3-4: "But thou, O LORD, knowest me: thou hast seen me, and tried mine heart toward thee: pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter. How long shall the land mourn. . .?" This is happening today. People are making a profession of religion yet lying in wickedness. Today many people claim to be right, but they are just as wrong as they can be. What they once condemned, they are practicing and upholding, such as division. Division is still wrong. Jesus' prayer was that we all may be one—not for everyone to have his own camp meeting, to do what he likes and to say what he wants—but one, where everyone is pulling for the same goal.

The condition in Jeremiah's time was blighting the life of the whole nation. As he went on pouring out his heart before God, God came on the scene and began to speak. He called to the Prophet, in so many words, "Take a closer look, Jeremiah, at the state of affairs. If you have run with footmen and they have worn you out, how are you going to contend with horses? and if, in the land of peace wherein you trust, they are wearing you out, how will you do in the swelling of Jordan?"

You do not hear much about standing anymore. Everyone who is

sitting on the fence is falling for whatever comes and whatever goes. You may question, "Are you to provoke a rebellion?" I am only trying to point out the state of affairs.

The Swelling of Jordan

As I looked upon the question in the latter part of verse 5, I noticed three things especially worthy of comment. First, Jeremiah had a Jordan before him. How wilt *thou* (not they) do in the swelling of Jordan? Dear heart, we have a God to meet one day. We each must stand before God in the Judgment one day. Working out some kind of peaceful coexistent pact with the devil's crowd for a moment of false security is not going to help you. People need to get back to where they will stand against that which is wrong.

Look how far society has gone with legalizing homosexuality. Some people would say, "Oh, don't you talk about that, because you are only promoting . . ." Promoting what? Someone may say, "You are robbing people of their rights. They have a right to be homosexual if that is what they want." Friend, no one has that right. One may say, "If that is the way they were born, don't you think they have a right?" They were not born so. A homosexual was not born homosexual any more than a thief was born a thief. The thief became a thief after he was born. Likewise, the homosexual became a homosexual after he was born, in most cases through rejecting God's divine Word. You need to read Chapter 1 of the Book of Romans.

The world is getting so far removed from morality that many people do not consider drugs to be such a threat. Now some are advocating the legalization of it. No doubt, even religious professors are pushing for the legalization of marijuana.

The second thing that is worthy of comment is that the Lord said Jordan was going to be swollen; the waters are going to be rising much more than they ordinarily are. Third,

you are going to have to cross Jordan. Friend, what will *you* do in the swelling of Jordan? As we all know, "Jordan" is figurative language used to symbolize and represent the time of departing and meeting with our Maker. Even that has changed anymore. The medical profession has gained so much control and power that few of us are privileged to see how awful dying without Christ really is. When one gets sick, they haul him off to a hospital, and the doctors pump his body full of drugs. After a while, the individual is gone.

Often we hear people say, "He died good." What do you mean *good*? He was pumped full of drugs. How else could he have died? He was incoherent, not even knowing what was going on. Then they say, "God rest his soul. He has gone to Heaven to rest with his Maker." Come on. Wrong is still wrong, and right is still right, and sin is still wrong. If you live wrong, you will die wrong. If you want to die right, you must live right. People are taking for granted that just because a person belonged to a church and was good to the neighborhood that he has gone to rest. No, God yet commands men everywhere to repent, and except *you* repent, you shall likewise perish.

God wanted the Prophet to realize the seriousness of departing from this life without God. So, in essence, the Lord was saying, "Jeremiah, why are you so worked up about the wicked? You need to get ready for the hour when *you* will meet your Maker. Let the wicked prosper in their prospering. Let those who deal treacherously go on as they are. You need to attend to getting ready for the swelling of Jordan." There used to be a time when we took for granted that, because a person went to church, he or she was ready for Heaven. However, now you cannot imagine how many are sitting in church pews who are just as wrong as the many who are sitting in the barrooms. Friend, you can sit on a church pew

and still go to hell; you can still share your eternity with the damned. Or you can be born again, ready for your Master.

Again, I remind you that we are living in a time when many have a form of godliness but no power, and it seems to be worsening. There is hardly anywhere else to look now for anything bright or encouraging. It is no wonder that Jesus said when these things begin to come to pass, lift up your heads, for your redemption is drawing nigh.

The Seriousness of Dying Without Christ

Let us look again at the solemnizing question in verse 5 of our Scripture text: "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" Notice that it is an individual matter. He did not say, "How shall *they* do?" or "How shall *we* do?" but "How wilt *thou* do?" You can swing with the crowd and follow the multitude, but when it comes time for you to cross "Jordan," or to meet God, "How wilt *thou* do?" You have to quit this thing of allowing people to talk you out of your experience or joining in with them in their rebellion against God and their fight against the things of God.

David made this statement in 1 Kings 2:1-2 just before his death: "Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man." David said, "*I* go," not *we*. Each of us is going to face death individually. Just because those who have already died have not come back to tell you what kind of trip it is, you are not to dismiss it from your thoughts as something that is not worthwhile to consider. It is time to look back into the Word of God and see the seriousness of dying without Christ.

"How will you do, friend? Are you making any progress toward being ready to meet God, in being

ready for the Judgment? Are you merely satisfying yourself with the idea that because you belong to a church and you are being called "brother" or "sister" that you are all right? You *must* be born again; it is not "maybe" or "if it suits your fancy" or "if you please." Being born again is essential.

David did not say "we" are going the way of all the earth; he said, "I go." I thank God for those whom I have seen depart from this life in the faith, in the Lord; but do you know what is troubling me? So many are departing from this life without leaving behind one testimony, one word of instruction to the young and rising generation, or one word of comfort or consolation to those whom they are leaving behind. They are just dying. Because people want to believe that those who died were all right, they say they died good and made it to Heaven. It is going to take something to die good; it is going to take something to make it to Heaven.

The Dangers of the Dying Hour

How many people are holding things in their hearts against others? How many are fighting, misusing, abusing their fellowman and sometimes their fellow brethren, yet expecting to die ready for Heaven? Friend, you cannot die and go to Heaven not having anything to do with another brother. There used to be a time when camp meeting was held and everyone was glad to come together and rejoice together. Now some say, "Don't go there," and they are looking upon it as righteousness. That is wickedness! You should not bow to that stuff. You ought to stand up and be counted for Jesus!

When Daniel was going to be a captive in Babylon, he purposed in his heart before he got there that Babylon was not going to defile him. He had no sooner arrived there and he was faced with the king's order that he was to be fed from the king's own table, the best in the land. He was to be feasting like the king.

However, to use modern terminology, Daniel said, "Thanks, but no thanks. I would rather eat what I have been eating."

Something is radically wrong with the state of affairs today. I could say more, but I think you have a picture of how serious our situation is today. You can hardly get people to bow at an altar of prayer anymore. They do not see the need of it. They do not feel they are lacking within themselves. They do not even realize that there are depths to be experienced in serving God that so far not many are finding.

Some are letting others lead them away from God, or lead them away from righteousness. What seems to be occurring today is that people are moved by those who can talk the slickest. We need to get back to the old-time religion, for if not, many are going to end up friendless and without a Savior on their dying day. People need to pay closer attention to the matter of leaving this life. Having good times, lots of money, or friends is not good enough. At death we each must go alone to meet God. No one can plead your case. What will you do in the swelling of Jordan?

It is time for an awakening. We are running with footmen and getting worn thin. How then are you going to contend with horses? If in the land wherein you have placed your trust they are getting you so fed up and so discouraged as to say, "What is the use?" What are you going to do in the swelling of Jordan? Notice that the end is inescapable. It is not a matter of how you will do *if* you should be called to face Jordan? The question is, "How will you do *in* the swelling of Jordan? In our Scripture text the Lord portrays death as a river that has overflowed its banks. God is making known the dangers of the dying hour.

When I became a Christian, those were some things that really stirred me. I can remember times that I would go to church, and after hearing the preacher preach, I would

hate to lie down because I was afraid that I might die and go to hell. I am glad that God troubled me like that then, and I am still concerned. I want to put that same old-time concern back into your heart, because it is not enough to be so carefree and so indifferent to the hour of death.

Again, the Lord portrayed death as a swollen river. One thing about a

swollen river is that you do not know what to expect. Another thing is that it is very treacherous; it is dangerous. You can be swept off your feet and have a disastrous end. All of that can take place in your hour of departing from this life. Therefore, how will you do? Are you going to go on as many have and are, paying no attention to the details and not being straight with your brethren and clear

with God? Are you going to continue with a mere profession of religion? What will you do in the end of time? You need to consider this seriously. May God help you to make your calling and election sure. God bless you.

(Cassette C-4706E)

[Guest Editorial—continued from page 21]
and with power."

In Daniel 9:27 we see a seventh confirmation of the new covenant. Why are there seven confirmations of the new covenant? Because it is a perfect and complete covenant. Again, verse 27 reads, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [seven years]; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." What is the midst of the week? Since each day represents a year, and there are seven days in a week, it is talking about seven years. Since a week is seven years, the midst of a week would be three and one-half years, and Christ was crucified after three and one-half years of public ministry. He was cut off in the midst of the week.

When the Scripture says "he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease," what is it talking about? The Old Testament sacrifices and oblations ended when Christ, our Sacrifice, offered Himself once and for all. No more sacrifices or oblations were needed; they ceased for time and eternity.

Hebrews 9:26 says, "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Christ became our sin offering. Hebrews 10:12 reads, "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." Right in the midst of the week, the sacrifices and the oblations, the old Levitical ordinances, ceased because there was no longer a need for them, since Jesus, the perfect Sacrifice, had been cut off in the midst of the week.

When we add three and one-half to A. D. 26, when Jesus was anointed while

he was being baptized of John, that takes us up to A. D. 29 and one half. Then what occurred? Daniel 9:27 says, "He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [or seven years]." When Christ first came, John 1:11 tells us that "He came to his own." He came to the Jewish nation first. Daniel 9:27 says, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many." Of whom was He speaking in this prophecy? Verse 24 tells us, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people." Those with whom He was going to confirm the covenant for the first seven years were His people.

Daniel 9:20 states, "And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel." Daniel was speaking of old Israel. Christ was going to confirm the covenant with His people first. He said in Matthew 15:24, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Even when the morning-time brethren began to preach, it says in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first."

The morning-time brethren were duty bound and obligated to go to the Jew first, but something occurred. We read in Acts 13:45-46: "But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you [the Jews]: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." The Jewish people refused God's offer of mercy. With the saving of Saul (the Apostle Paul) in A. D.

33, who became the Apostle of the Gentiles, the seventy weeks (or the four hundred ninety years) ended, and old Israel was cut off.

In the Book of Acts, up to Chapter 9, the Apostles had predominantly worked among the Jews. It was not until Chapter 10 that we read of Peter going to Cornelius' house. That is the first recorded account of a Gentile being approached. In Acts, Chapter 9, we have the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. In the commission that Ananias received concerning Saul, he was told in Acts 9:15, "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles." Paul's call was to take the Gospel to the Gentiles.

When Paul saw Christ on the Damascus Road and went to the street called Strait, Ananias prayed and Saul got a real experience of salvation and was called to be the Apostle to the Gentiles. That was in A. D. 33, four hundred ninety years after Cyrus issued the commandment in B. C. 457. When you add B. C. 457 and A. D. 33, you get a total of four hundred ninety years; and it ended in A. D. 33 with the conversion of Saul, who later became the Apostle Paul. According to Romans 11:13, Paul said, "I am the apostle of the Gentiles." He told them in Chapter 13 that seeing they judged themselves unworthy, "lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Then Israel was cut off. The salvation of the Apostle Paul and the severing of old Israel fulfilled or concluded the seventieth week. In the next article we will look further at what occurred after old Israel was cut off as the people of God.

Brother Earl R. Borders